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Call Us to Witness

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Hania and Gaither Warfield

Call

Us to Witness

A POLISH CHRONICLE



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*Because this book was written during
the German occupation of Poland,
the authors wished to conceal the
identity of certain persons and places.
Some names are therefore fictional.*

August 20 to September 3 1939

by *HANIA*

DISCONSOLATE, Gaither and I looked through the rain-splashed windowpanes as the last of our brief summer holiday trickled away. Ever since our marriage eleven years ago we had spent our vacations—which were always too brief—with my parents in their home in Bory. In less than a fortnight, on September 1, we would be leaving this beautiful mountain valley to return to Warsaw and Gaither's work as a minister of the Methodist Church in Poland.

It poured Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday—just one of those cold, wet spells frequent during August in the western Carpathians. All around Bory the fir-covered hills smoked under leaden skies.

On Wednesday, August 23, the sky cleared. Uncle Napoleon and Aunt Teresa, who were spending the summer here in Bory, came over early in the morning and suggested a picnic. Mother, or Camilla as she is known in the family, flew into action.

With the efficiency of a general, she fired volleys of instructions at the servants. When I arrived in the kitchen, I saw one of them plucking chickens, one preparing sandwiches, one beating eggs for a cake. Aunt Teresa and Martha, her daughter, had put on attractive tea aprons and stood in the middle of the kitchen looking decorative. Christine, my childhood friend and virtually a member of the family, took part in preparations futilely, for she had no great familiarity with housewifely arts. She was an X-ray technician in a Warsaw hospital.

We had hired three wagons and were waiting for them when the maid announced the Piateks—Anda and Wladek and their daughter Eva. They were friends of ours from New Market. The announcement of their arrival created consternation, and Gaither said, "Shucks, now we'll have to stay home!" But none of us wanted to, and the Piateks were delighted to picnic with us.

With laughter and chatter, our crowded caravan started up the mountain road, which was dazzling white and hot in the August sun. When we reached the clearing in the mountains, we dropped from our creaking wagons to the cool earth. The maids spread blankets and tablecloths on the grass and unpacked the food. Soon we were all eating around an aromatic campfire—eating crisp sandwiches of butter and greens, succulent fried chicken, spicy pickles. There was coffee and tea and milk. Our maids sat a small distance away, giggling and ogling the drivers, who, stretched out in disdainful poses, were watching us city folks having a good time. To them it was amusing.

Mother, Anda, Aunt Teresa, and I exchanged views on vitamins, religion, social questions, knitting, and heirloom recipes. Joe, my brother, who had just come from France for a visit, was swapping anecdotes with Gaither, whose Maryland accent lent piquancy to his Polish. Wladek, Father, and Uncle Napoleon were deep in politics. The two university women, Martha and Christine, were aloof on a rock, talking books. Mimi, our four-year-old, with her nurse trailing her, wandered off among the lush ferns—to look for strawberries and wolves, she explained. Our two younger maids, paying no attention to the reproving glances of the cook, continued flirting with the drivers.

Until we heard the rumble of thunder, none had noticed the gathering storm. We were having such a good time. In an instant, black clouds had filled the sky, extinguishing the last golden sunbeam which for a moment pierced the blue and sinister darkness. Then the rain! As we frantically packed the remains of our food, gathered in the straying horses, and raked together the smouldering embers of our campfire, the deluge began. Thunder rolled overhead, lightning struck with deafening noise again and again, trees splintered and crashed in the forest. For an hour we sat huddled under our blankets. Then, wet and cold, we made our way homeward down the mountain.

But spirits revived once we had changed our clothes, and

around the supper table, when the lamps had been lit, conversation and laughter bubbled again. We were still at the table when Judge Zaremba came in. His old face, usually wreathed in smiles, looked grave. He had just returned from Tarnow.

"Jews are packing and leaving the country. Something's up. There have been runs on the banks in Cracow and Warsaw. There's a lot of talk of war."

"War? Surely Hitler would not attack us. The nonaggression pact with Germany is still good," exclaimed Uncle Napoleon.

"The Jews are usually well informed," said Wladek, "and they have good reason to fear Hitler."

But Father doubted the imminence of war. "I don't think August is a good month for starting a war. The Germans are hard pressed for food. They wouldn't attack until after the harvest, maybe after the sugar beets have been taken in."

Gaither thought it could not happen. "Two weeks ago, when we were in Gdynia, a colonel assured me there would be no war this year."

None of us let ourselves be too much disturbed by the news. Even the Judge, after a slice of cake and a glass of blackberry cordial, brightened. Soon we were all laughing and talking about other matters. The party didn't break up until it was time to take Anda, Wladek, and Eva to the station. We said goodbye, promising ourselves another picnic the following week.

The next day, late in the afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Dolinski came in. They thrust a newspaper at us. It was an "Extra," carrying—in large black type—Hitler's ultimatum.

"This means war," said Mr. Dolinski in a shaking voice.

Father was annoyed. "Why get alarmed?" he said. "We don't want war. They don't want war. It's just one of those scares. They will make concessions; maybe we will make some too. Diplomats will dicker and bicker, and everything will get smoothed out."

Mr. Dolinski, a small man, seemed to swell with indignation. "Concessions? What concessions? Don't you realize, my dear

sir, that this is just a pretext? Hitler is only looking for an excuse."

"Well, maybe there will be no war," Mrs. Dolinska* interrupted tactfully, "but I'd like to get home. We've had a good summer, but it's time to go back to Poznan. We were to leave Tuesday anyway, and we might as well go tomorrow. We've come to say goodbye."

We promised to see them at the station. That evening other friends came in. They also, driven by war rumors, were hurrying home.

Next day, armed with the customary bouquets of flowers, we went to the quiet little pink-and-white railroad station, overgrown with Virginia creeper and petunias. The waiting room presented a strange picture. It was jammed with people and luggage. Whole families—their hats askew, eyes apprehensive, hastily-packed suitcases bulging—were waiting for the train. We had difficulty in finding the Dolinskis in the throng. Mrs. Dolinska, with tears in her eyes, threw her arms around Mother and me and said, "I have the worst presentiments. Don't stay here. It's too close to the border. Come with us—you can all live in our home."

We felt touched, though slightly amused. Mother thanked her: "That's sweet of you, but we are not afraid. We are sure this will blow over."

The train from White Springs came, overflowing with people—the first panic-stricken wave of crying children, distraught women, and vociferating men—mostly Jewish families from the numerous summer resorts up the valley. Deck chairs, bedding tied in bundles, and boxes and suitcases hung not only from platforms and doors but even from the roofs and windows of the coaches. Train upon train went through that day and the following, carrying crowds. We went to the station several times to look and to wonder. To us, war seemed an impossible thing.

Uncle Napoleon, afraid that political events might separate him from his bacteriological institute, returned to Lwow with

* Polish family names have both a masculine and a feminine ending.

his family. We parted, not realizing that we would never see him again. Christine, whose vacation had ended, left at the same time to return to her work in Warsaw.

By Saturday, Bory and the adjoining watering places were almost deserted. All had gone except the permanent residents, among them my parents, who, ever since Father's retirement from the active ministry, had made their home in Bory. Their peaceful white house on the hill seemed the safest kind of haven, but our optimism was shaken, for the newspapers, though cautious, were bringing alarming news. We had to admit that war was imminent. Gaither said to me, "I don't expect anything to happen, Hania, but I feel I should go back to Warsaw. Chambers is away and I have to send out salaries to our preachers." The Reverend Edmund Chambers—a colleague of Gaither's—was treasurer of the Methodist Church in Poland. "Then, too, I must arrange for the work of the church in case of emergency. It would be best for you and Mimi to stay here. A little place like Bory is safer than Warsaw."

"But," I objected, "what if we are separated? I'd rather go back with you. Besides, Mimi and I have only summer clothes here."

"Don't worry. I'll be gone only a few days, and I'll bring back the winter things."

On Saturday morning Mother and I held a council in the seclusion of the orchard. To get ready for what was ahead, we decided to buy all the food, clothing, soap, and fuel we could find. We realized there would be a struggle with the men of the family, who would consider such precautions unnecessary and hysterical, but we resolved to be firm. We also agreed that it would be best to send Mimi's nurse back to Warsaw to her people, for we did not want the responsibility of looking after a young girl in case of war. Besides, it would be easier to feed a reduced household.

Helga Schade—a neighbor and an old friend of mine—dropped in to warn us that the village stores were closing in rapid succession. "Buy a sack of flour, at least, while it is still available," she advised.

There was little money in the house, but we scraped together all that could be found. We asked Father and Gaither to drive to town. They raised a thousand objections and muttered darkly about panic-mongers, hoarders, and feminine nerves. But we, the gynaeceum, were firm, and finally Mother and Gaither drove off together. Hours later they returned with a small supply of food.

That night I was awakened by the sound of an unusually heavy train rumbling up the mountain. I got out of bed and looked down the slope towards the railroad tracks. Then I ran to Mother's room and woke her up. We stood at the open window and watched a long freight train carrying, on big open platforms, strange tarpaulin-covered shapes. "Cannons," Mother whispered.

"They are taking them to White Springs. It means war."

I woke Gaither up to tell him. Unalarmed, he went back to sleep. I stayed awake, frightened for the first time.

It was Monday, and a perfect day, when I said goodbye to Gaither. I did not go with him to the station but stayed in the garden, from where I could watch the train go by. I stood in dazzling sunshine, among the dahlias, the phlox, and the marigolds, waving my handkerchief. Tears streamed down my face. Like all to whom tears do not come easily, I was ashamed of them but could not check them. A nameless fear possessed me as the train disappeared around the bend.

That evening Stasia, Judge Zaremba's daughter, rushed in to tell us of the explosion of the time bomb in the railroad station in Tarnow. "It was planted in the baggage room. Thirty people were killed."

My heart beat furiously. Gaither! Had he escaped? His train had passed through that station. The hours of terrible anxiety seemed endless.

During the night I was awakened by masculine voices under my window. At first I thought it was Joe and Father taking a stroll in the garden. But there were more than two voices. I tiptoed to Joe's room. He was fast asleep in his bed. Father

was also breathing peacefully. Then who were the men in our garden? I ran back to my room and looked out from behind the curtains. Our back yard and garden were filled with moving shadows. I could not distinguish who they were. As the sky began to gray, I made out about fifteen armed Polish soldiers hiding among the rosebushes and outbuildings and watching the Czech border a mile up the hill.

On Tuesday morning the town crier came down the road, beating on his drum. I ran out and heard with others the announcement that the Mayor had ordered special home defense measures: attics cleared, buckets of water and sand prepared, and one room in every house made ready as a gas shelter. The day was unusually warm and the attic was like a furnace, as we carried down boxes, trunks, old furniture, and the million odds and ends that in the course of years find their way to the attic. We carried up pails of water and sand and distributed them in strategic points. We picked out one of the upstairs rooms and made it ready for a gas shelter. Mother found, in a magazine, a timely article on how to convert a baby's rubber panties into a gas mask. We studied this carefully, only to realize that there were no rubber panties in the house and that probably none could be obtained within a radius of fifty miles.

A post card came from Gaither, telling me he had arrived in Warsaw. I could breathe again—he was alive. He enjoined me to keep calm and not to worry. He expected to be back within a few days and was mailing me one hundred zlotys. (A zloty was approximately nineteen cents. The money never reached me.)

Someone came in and brought us bad news: Marysia, the twenty-year-old daughter of our neighbor Gomulak, had been killed by the bomb in Tarnow. She had left for Tarnow on Sunday because she thought it would be a safer place than Bory. From Tarnow she had written a card to her fiancé and had taken it to the station to mail on Monday. Both her legs had been torn off by the explosion, and she had died with the unmailed card in her hand.

We read in the papers that the Germans had blown up bridges in the vicinity of New Market. By this time unrest had spread even to the local population. The shopkeepers were selling out part of their stock, storing the rest in cellars, packing, and leaving with their families.

Lebdowicz, of the local railroad co-operative, came to tell us that he was selling out and was leaving that evening for New Market. It was a fine chance to add to our small store of supplies. At the co-operative I found the floor littered with empty packing boxes, wrapping papers, and string. I bought the last of soap, kerosene, and chocolate bars, and Lebdowicz also urged on me a bottle of cologne. I delivered the purchases at home, then ran to the village and made the rounds of stores that were still open. I tried to buy stockings, heavy shoes, and yard goods, but others had had the same idea, and all I could get was one pair of antiquated laced shoes, a few pairs of black cotton hose, some red outing flannel, and three pairs of streaked and faded blue stockings for Mimi—in case Gaither failed to bring our warm clothes.

Everywhere wagons and buggies were being loaded with hastily-thrown-together bundles of bedding and clothing. The village square, with its fountain surrounded by pink, blue, and lemon-colored houses, presented a picture of tumult and confusion.

I tried to persuade Joe to leave at once for France if he wanted to get back to his wife before the storm broke. With our nerves on edge, this gave rise to a quarrel as he stubbornly maintained that there could be no war, and that I was being hysterical. He went off in a huff, carrying with him his fishing rod and camera, and didn't come back until late. That very night news came over the radio that railroad communications with Germany had been severed.

Because of his broken arm and nearsightedness, Joe, who had retained his Polish citizenship while living in France, had been classified in Category C (the equivalent of 4-F) by the Polish military authorities. But I feared that he would want to join the army as a volunteer in case of an emergency. Pacifist

by conviction, I was opposed to any member of the family taking part in an armed conflict.

Bory was emptying rapidly. The peasants were mostly retreating into the mountains and forests, driving their livestock before them. The Jewish population was fleeing to the cities. Many of them rushed in at the last moment, entreating us to leave also.

One of the few who decided to remain was old, gray-bearded Pejser, the Orthodox Jewish butcher who lived at the foot of our hill. But his daughter Ryfka came to say goodbye. Tears were streaming down her fat cheeks. She deposited a heavy bundle, which she asked me to put away for her. It contained flat silver, two fur coats, and four sterling-silver, handwrought Menorahs. Her sister and brother-in-law, the Grünbergs, had already left. Her brother Szmul—the Scholar as he was proudly called by the family, being the only one of them who had a high school education—came in with an armful of Yiddish books. Chaim, another brother, followed with the Grünbergs' radio in his arms.

I threw up my hands in horror. I had heard enough about the new laws of Germany to know that in case of invasion we would be called to account for protecting Jewish property. The candlesticks could be buried, the clothing and silverware bore no hallmark of Jewry, but the books were incriminating material. I didn't want to take the radio either, but they begged so insistently, saying that the set had been bought only recently and was of great value, that I gave in. I took it into one of the guest rooms upstairs and stowed it under the bed.

In the afternoon a young soldier knocked on the kitchen door. With a shy smile he explained that he had arrived with a small unit and asked if he could buy some bread and milk, as most of the stores were closed and their own supplies had not come. These supplies, we were to find out later, were never to materialize. Mother told him that we did not have a *gospodarstwo* (a farm) and had to buy our milk and bread, and therefore could not sell him any, but that we would be glad to have him as our guest. Sophia, the cook, made tea,

heated up some good, rich soup, and prepared a thick sandwich of veal cutlet and dill pickles.

The boy—he was barely twenty-one—had typical Polish blue eyes and a childish freckled face. His cropped head was somehow ridiculous and touching. He had two younger brothers and a sister younger than Mimi. Called for military training a few months ago, he was now homesick for his father's small farm near Cracow. Mother asked him to return the next day and eat with us. He kissed her hand and promised to be back.

We didn't get much sleep that night. At first the country was strangely quiet. But there was a tenseness in the air that even the animals felt, for the only sound that broke the uncanny stillness was the howling of dogs. For hours I watched the moon-drenched mountainside, waiting unconsciously for something to happen. Finally the sharp staccato of machine guns cut the suspense. The storm had broken over Bory.

Our soldiers had been very busy for several days digging trenches along the highway and across the mountain ridge facing our house. They put up barbed-wire entanglements and scooped out foxholes for machine-gun nests and snipers. There was only a handful of men, but more, we were told, would be sent up shortly. In case of war, an attack was to be expected from the Czechoslovakian side, since our valley offered a path for invasion. The Polish Army was installing heavy guns in Ruda, our first point of resistance to the north, and they were aimed directly at Bory, which, because of the narrowness of the valley, could easily be turned into a deathtrap for the enemy. We were in a dangerous position, since our home lay in no-man's land, between the German and Polish lines. Our wooden house would not survive under artillery or machine-gun fire.

I was inclined to do what others were doing. I wanted to flee away from the border. But Mother and Father were firm in their resolution to stay. "If the Lord had meant us to leave, He would have given us the means to do so," Mother argued. "We are too old to travel on foot, you are not strong enough

to carry a chubby child, and we don't have the money to hire or buy a horse and wagon." I had to give in.

My thoughts kept turning to Gaither. I hoped he could reach us soon or, better, that he would leave Warsaw with the American Embassy staff. Although he had lived in Poland for fifteen years and considered it his second home, I felt he had no business in this war. With all my soul I wanted him out of the country and back in his native United States.

On Wednesday there wasn't much shooting, and from our windows we watched the Polish soldiers laying mines under the river bridges. Our young soldier friend thoughtfully came to tell us that if we wanted anything from the village this was our last chance, for soon the road would be closed off by trenches and barbed wire. He looked embarrassed, as if the fault were his that we were to be left thus marooned.

We had dismissed two of the servants, so I asked Sophia, the only one left, to take two baskets and accompany me to the baker's.

It wasn't until we had reached the first foxhole on the highway that I realized how I, in my red sweater and white dress, and Sophia, in her bright blue dress, were perfect targets for the Germans sitting on the border. Fortunately there was little firing. Only occasionally we could hear an isolated rifleshot, and each time I felt my arms crawling with gooseflesh. The soldiers, in trenches and foxholes, were grimly watching the border, with their rifles cocked. Sophia cried, so I told her to go back home. With a basket dangling from each arm, I continued jauntily, hoping the soldiers wouldn't notice the shaking of my legs. At the store I bought two large round loaves of bread. They were still warm from the oven and smelled deliciously of yeast and caraway seed.

Walking back, I noticed that most of the soldiers had broken off branches from the trees and planted them around their foxholes. Many firs had been cut down and stuck into holes, so that sections of the road seemed converted into a forest. One of the soldiers hailed me.

"Are you crazy, to be walking in broad daylight down this

road? Don't you know the Germans can pick you off like a partridge?" He was very young and haggard.

"People must eat," I replied. "Besides, you see I am a veteran. I have seen other wars. You will soon find out there is nothing to be afraid of."

I managed to give him a bright smile and walked on. Somehow this pretense of bravery had comforted me, and I was not too scared as I deposited my load on the kitchen table. Sophia, I found out, had had a heart attack and was lying down. Father, who had been to the Werles, informed us that the last train from Bory would be leaving around 5:00 P.M. He had to admit that things looked black. With a shock I realized that Gaither's return was impossible. There was more firing on the mountain, and, although the radio was still cheerful and did not mention war, we knew that war had started. It seemed obvious that before long our sunny countryside, the smiling hills, and our house and garden would be in the midst of a battle. I saw no way of escape.

Lola Walczykowa, a neighbor, dropped in, and we sat down in the garden. There was nothing comforting we could say to each other. Ir, her husband, an actor and radio announcer in Katowice, was away like Gaither, and now would not be able to return.

I decided to write a farewell letter to Gaither. It seemed somehow very important that he should have this last message. Though I had attempted to express my innermost feelings, it seemed to me an ineffectual letter. I took it to the station and dropped it in the letter chute of the mail coach. A few railroad men were loading document files and a safe. The stationmaster was running around in circles, waving his long arms aimlessly. His wife, who had caught sight of me from her window, dashed out with a bird in its cage and a cat. She said, "We are leaving. Could you take care of my cat and canary?" Her peroxide hair hung in wisps, and the mascara she always used lavishly had run and streaked.

I firmly refused. I could not know that the same evening

a fleeing neighbor would leave a litter of five kittens on our doorstep.

With a sinking feeling of despair, I watched the train pull out of the station and disappear. It seemed to carry away with it the last trace of security and peace. On my way home I saw a few peasants standing in a front yard. Within the house a radio was blaring. I joined the little group and listened. Many border incidents had occurred in the West, the announcer was saying. Men had been killed, property destroyed. One of the peasants told me that he had just returned from Katowice and that he had seen barns burned down by German storm troopers.

When I got home I didn't say much, but Father, after glancing at me, said, "You mustn't take it so hard. We've seen other wars. Maybe we will pull through this one too."

"But it may last two or three years! Think how happy we all were! Don't you and Mother deserve a peaceful old age? My whole childhood was spent in the midst of wars. The World War, the Ukrainian War, the Bolshevik invasion--and now this! And Poland is not prepared. We can't resist!"

Father quietly replied: "I know we are not prepared, but after all equipment is not everything. No war has yet been won in banks and factories. It's the spirit that counts, and you know that although we love peace it isn't peace at any cost that we want. If we're attacked, we'll defend our country."

Not seeing Joe around, I asked, "Where's Joe?"

"He has gone to enlist as a volunteer."

Joe a volunteer! Like me, he was an outspoken pacifist. And yet I felt that he had done the only thing. How quickly stark reality swept aside theories.

The radio, to which we listened constantly, still did not mention war.

That night the firing continued, and a single German tank crossed the border near our house and attacked our local customhouse. After a skirmish it retired.

War or no war, the routine of a household has to go on. An enormous wash had accumulated, and Mother, thinking

there was no point in waiting, had sent for the laundress. On Thursday morning the whole house was filled with the smell of soap and steam. Towards noon shooting started on the border again, and our laundress quickly left. Sophia was still sick, so Mother and I decided to string up the clotheslines in the back yard and do the bluing and hanging ourselves. We started on the smaller pieces, but the unaccustomed work proceeded slowly. Mother cheerfully maintained that it was excellent for our morale. But we grew very tired and left some of the larger pieces soaking in the tubs.

That night I thought we would never have to bother about laundry again. German tanks made several sorties; our soldiers counterattacked with rifles and hand grenades. Polish machine guns rattled under the front windows, while the German shots appeared to come from the upper garden.

Joe, who had left Thursday afternoon for Ruda, on foot, trying again to enlist (so far he had not been accepted on account of a shortage of uniforms and ammunition) came back at two in the morning. He found us sleeping for the first time in one of the outbuildings, which, because it was built into the slope of the hill, was more protected both from our own and from enemy fire. The straw sacks we had spread out on the floor were hard and lumpy but smelled sweetly of fresh hay.

At the break of dawn—it was Friday, September 1—we were aroused by a powerful drone overhead. We rushed out and saw three large planes flying in close formation from over the Czechoslovakian border. They headed towards New Market, and soon we heard heavy detonations in that direction. When they came back, we noticed black crosses on their wings. There was a burst of firing from the Polish machine-gun nests on the neighboring hill.

From then on, German planes came in twos and threes, sometimes flying so low that we could plainly see the bombs hanging under the cockpits. Our house—red-roofed, large, white, and perched on the hill—seemed painfully conspicuous.

Despite my protests, Mother made me go back to our wash.

With trembling hands I put a number of sheets on the lines, where they flapped and blew in the wind—a direct challenge, it seemed to me, to the Luftwaffe. Two sheets, for lack of space, I spread out on the lawn.

Several of the bombers, attracted by this unusual sight, circled overhead, swooping repeatedly down to almost roof level. Each time I crouched close to the ground, eyes shut tight and fingers in my ears, expecting the end. But to my surprise nothing happened. Three months later I learned that this wash had saved us. Germans living in Poland had been given secret instructions by the Nazis to hang out their wash when the war broke out. It was a sign for the German fliers not to drop bombs on their homes.

I had told Mimi that whenever she saw an approaching plane she should run and hide in the cellar. But when I heard that a villager's home had been set on fire by incendiary bullets, I realized that the house would be the worst possible place. I decided that at least Mimi should have a shelter. Armed with a pickax, I went into the little canyon behind our garden and began to dig. The day was very warm. After an hour I saw nothing but a small hollow, thirty inches across and ten inches deep, and I called Father to help me. He said it would be hopeless to dig deeper without the use of dynamite, since the bottom of the canyon was solid rock. I returned to the house—dust, tears, and sweat mingling on my face.

Unmindful of the sporadic shooting, Mother was sitting on the back porch, reading *Gone With the Wind*.

"I think," I said, "that we should pack a few suitcases and have them ready in case the house is set on fire. Some clothing, a few bars of chocolate, our documents, and whatever money is left."

"You're right. That's really a good idea, and we'll have to do it first thing tomorrow."

"My goodness! Right now; not tomorrow! It may be too late then!"

Mother was fingering the pages of her book. "Oh, all right. But let me finish this chapter. It's so exciting, I can hardly

wait to see what will happen next. Look, I have only two more pages."

I left her to her reading and went to pack two bags, one for Mimi and one for myself, with essential things. When I went back to the porch I found Mother still reading. She exclaimed, "What a story! And wasn't Scarlett wonderful! So brave!" She saw my reproving gaze. "You see, dear," she explained, "I'd like to finish this book. It would be annoying if anything should happen to me before I find out whether Rhett marries her or not."

After lunch Joe turned on the radio. While he was dialing, trying to get France, snatches of songs drifted into the room. A lighthearted Parisian hit . . . a lullaby from Rumania . . . dance music from Turin. He turned the knob to the Warsaw station. We heard then that war had broken out. The Germans had attacked simultaneously from three sides. The first air raids on Warsaw and many other cities had occurred that morning. The number of casualties was staggering.

Mother was pale as she turned to Joe. "It's a losing fight," she said. "We won't be able to resist very long. You'll have to go, son; even if they have no uniforms left. They'll take you now."

The commentator had said that the crowds gathered on Unter den Linden had received Hitler's furious speech in silence, without cheers. I could see them—standing with heavy hearts, awaiting a verdict of life and death. To me they were not yet The Enemy. I thought of them as victims of a brutal regime, and a tremendous pity welled up in me for us, for them. Mother, as if reading my thoughts, said, "We have to defend our own. We'll have to fight. But if only we could hate them. It would be easier."

On Sunday, September 3, after a cold night, the day came clear and hot. The sun beat down from a turquoise sky. The flowers, alive with color—dahlias like tall flames, salvias like fresh blood—seemed to be mocking our tragedy. For the first time nature appeared to me as something alien and hostile to man. Even the sky seemed to have betrayed us. "General Rain,"

as the French were to call him later, would have been an important ally on the country roads of Poland and in the eastern marshes, but he was to come too late.

There was a lot of fighting on the border. Even to my untrained ears, the superiority of the German guns was obvious. Sophia, frightened out of her wits, had disappeared in some hiding place. But Mother, a believer in work as a panacea for all spiritual ills, found ever new jobs for all in the household. As I dusted, mopped, made beds, and darned, I felt small and helpless. Every time the machine guns rattled, I had the sensation of turning into jelly. My muscles and bones seemed to have become soft and unsubstantial. With a tingling sensation, I could feel the bullets whizzing through me. During a lull in the fighting, old peasant Stypula crept up the hill to our house. His cousin, he said, had smuggled the information across the border that the Germans intended to attack on a large scale that night. I ran to the soldiers guarding the nearest bridge and asked to see the officer in charge. A young man stepped forward. When I told him, his face seemed to drain of blood. His eyes shot towards the men, taking in their equipment. There were only twelve of them. "Thank you," he said.

Early in the afternoon a hard-voiced military radio announcer from Warsaw was giving out air-raid warnings. A large flight of German planes was approaching from the west, he said. Suddenly the speaker's voice changed and, hoarse with emotion, he said, "Our ally, Great Britain, has just declared war on Germany. France has announced that she will send in her declaration of war within a few hours. Speaking to all Poles! Notify all citizens!"

For the first time Father and Mother broke down. Tears streamed down their faces.

"O God! We are not alone! We have friends! We have allies!"

We rushed out of the house. Father ran to Stypula's, Mother went to Pejser's; and I ran up the road, looking for someone to whom to impart the glad tidings. I grabbed a peasant by the arm, shouting in his astonished face that England was on our

side, that France would help us. I dashed on, bursting with joy. When I told the news to a strange woman—I knew she was not one of our villagers, though she was dressed in peasant clothes—she gave me a baleful glare, then, without a word, went towards the border. A thought flashed through my mind: “She must be a spy!”

On September 4 there was more firing in the distance than before. We could hear a battle raging around Krosno. Heavy guns rolled like thunder to the west, and there was firing directly to the north. We seemed to be surrounded by a ring of battles. At every heavier detonation, we would walk out into the garden to hear if it was drawing nearer. We would ask one another, “In which direction is it now?” For weeks afterwards, Mimi, when asked to fetch a handkerchief, a book, or a scarf, would inquire, “In which direction does it lie, Mummie?”

We had pointed out to her the bombs hanging under the fusilage of the German planes that flew overhead. The sight impressed her. Sometime later, while looking at an illustrated book of Andersen’s fairy tales, she pointed to the picture of an angel carrying a baby in his arms and said, “Look, Mummie, he is carrying a little bomb.”

That evening our little soldier appeared at dusk. He expected to be shifted and wanted to say goodbye. Mother brought out some cookies and elderberry wine. He put the cookies in his pocket. He kept turning his cap in his hands in a sheepish and embarrassed manner. Several times he repeated, without any apparent reason, “A very cold night, a very cold night tonight. You had better take plenty of covers and put on warm clothing too.”

“Joseph,” I said to him, “when are you going to blow up the bridges? You know you promised the other day to let me know.”

He cleared his throat and blurted out, “We are not supposed to tell.” Then he grabbed my hand, kissed it, and repeated, “A very cold night. Put on plenty of clothing, and God bless you for everything.” He disappeared in the darkness.

We went to bed early, because we had been ordered to blackout and there was nothing else to do. After midnight Joe came back from Ruda, where he had gone to enlist. He had narrowly missed being shot for a German spy. Saboteurs were very active and so, when a military patrol stopped him on his way back and saw his passport issued in Strasbourg (the soldiers thought it was a German city), and his billfold full of French and German money (left from his recent trip), they were convinced he was a saboteur. They stood him up against the nearest picket fence for the execution, when our mayor, who, of course, knew Joe, happened to drive by with the chief of our local police. These two were startled to see Joe facing an execution squad. They vouched for his loyalty and obtained his release. I asked Joe if he had been mistreated.

"No," he said, "the soldiers merely scratched their heads in a perplexed way, and asked me rather kindly to stand up against the fence because they would have to shoot me."

"Were you scared, Joe?"

"No, it just seemed silly to go that way for no reason at all. I had the feeling that such a thing could not happen to me."

I woke up from a deep sleep in complete darkness. There was not a sound outside or in the house, and I could not imagine what had roused me. Driven by an impulse, I took the mattress off my bed, carried it to the bathroom, and laid it on the floor, close to the big iron bathtub. Then I carried Mimi from her bed and put her down next to the tub, with her head under the rounded side. I stretched out beside her and went off to sleep.

It couldn't have been much later when a terrific crash shook the foundations of the house. I was trying to realize what had happened when a second blast ripped through the night. Doors flew open, a chair fell over in my room, broken glass tinkled through the house. In the bathroom, soap, towels, toothbrushes fell around me in a shower. I lay for a while, too stunned to move, when a third and fourth explosion occurred farther away. In the stillness that followed I realized that no one was

moving in the house. I struggled into my slippers and ran to Father and Mother's room. The moonlight was streaming through the windows. Broken glass, like spilled water, glistened on the floor. A cold wind was blowing through the room. Not seeing anyone up, I called out in a strangled voice, "Are you awake? Did you hear it?"

Mother answered in her everyday tone, "I couldn't help hearing it, dear."

"It must be heavy artillery or bombs," I said. "Aren't you getting up?"

Mother answered, "My dear child, we are old people, and if we have to die, we would rather die in comfort, in our own beds."

This was too much for me, and I burst out in wild sobbing, feeling that I wanted to run and hide somewhere. Father, seeing my terror, said sternly, "Your nerves or your faith must be in pretty bad shape, daughter, don't you think?"

I stumbled back to my mattress and a grumbling Mimi, who was demanding why she was in the bathroom on the floor and why I was allowing this terrible noise to wake her.

Fearing further explosions, I tried to put on some clothes but was unable to do it. Then I noticed that my left arm hung limply and I could not use it. The numbness lasted for several hours, then gradually wore off. It probably was shell shock.

Around four in the morning Stypula knocked at the back door. He informed me that our soldiers, after blowing up the bridges, had withdrawn and that the first German patrols, protected by a big tank, had come as far as the railroad station and had gone back. His cousin, who lived across the Czech border, had just crept through the German lines and informed him that around seven in the morning they would be back in greater force.

My first impulse was to wake the household, but, remembering Father's rebuke after the explosions, I didn't dare do so right away. Cold and shaking with nervousness, I waited till six, then went in. We all agreed that Joe couldn't stay; he would have to leave immediately. With the help of a crying

and half-awake Sophia, I prepared breakfast for him while he shaved and packed his knapsack. Hardly a word was spoken. I could detect no nervousness in him. He was humming softly, and methodically putting in a knapsack his camera, some post cards, his shaving kit, one change of underwear, an extra pair of shoes, and, to my consternation, some fishing tackle. He said that he intended to make his way across the mountains and join Gaither. From the sounds of cannon and shooting, we had our doubts whether this was feasible. We seemed to be surrounded already on all four sides by the advancing German armies. Still, for him to stay meant certain death, so we did not object to his plan. We kissed him goodbye, and in silence watched him walk down the hill and around the river bend, out of the village, towards the north.

Father and Mother suddenly remembered old Mrs. Werle, who was just convalescing from an illness. Thinking that Mrs. Werle and her husband might be frightened and alone, Mother said that she and Father would go to sit with them and give what comfort they could. Sophia, weeping and shaking, went back to bed, where she lay a helpless mass.

For a long time I stood in the living room staring at the road on which I had seen the receding form of Joe. Happening to glance in the opposite direction, I was startled to see six or seven brown-shirted men slowly advancing down the middle of the road. They carried guns and kept turning their heads in every direction, looking for a possible assailant. My heart stopped, then started racing madly. The first Germans! I watched them advance, then stop, and, after a short parley, go back towards the Czechoslovakian frontier. I thought of the reports Joe had brought back from one of his expeditions to New Market on what had happened in several villages around Zakopane, which were among the first to be invaded.

Out of sheer nervousness I turned on the radio and heard the morning announcements. The speaker enumerated the casualties of the battles that had been fought during the night on the western and northern borders. When he gave details of what the invaders had done to women and children in

occupied villages, I could stand it no longer and snapped off the radio. So this is what we were to expect. They might simply shoot us, lock us in our houses, and burn us up, or nail us to the doors.

Without thinking what I was doing, I ran to my room, put on my best dress, rouged and powdered, and fixed my hair carefully, dressed Mimi, brushed her hair, and, taking her into my lap, sat down on the front porch to await the end. Then I remembered the bottle of perfume Joe had brought me from Paris. Well, if I had to die, I would die, but they wouldn't get that perfume.

Vindictively, I was pulling out the stopper when Mother walked into the bathroom. "What are you doing?" she asked.

"Pouring this down the drain," I replied.

"But, why? That is foolish."

As usual, her common sense acted on me like a cold shower.

"Where is Father?" I asked.

"He has gone to look up Mr. Wilk and Mr. Steiner. He thinks the three of them should meet the German troops and ask for mercy for the women and children in our village. I wanted to go with him, but he wouldn't let me."

"Have the Germans come in yet?"

"A small group of them came to Mr. Werle's house while we were there and asked where the Polish troops were. But, can you imagine, Mr. Werle answered in Polish that he didn't speak their language. Father spoke to them. They told him they would be back towards noon to occupy Bory."

The Werles, though loyal Polish citizens, had originally come from Austria. We had known them for thirty years, ever since they settled in Bory. Their son, Kurt, had been for many years a Polish vice consul abroad. Their daughter, Helga, had married a Pole, Wladislaw Schade.

Soon Father returned. Scornfully he told us that Mr. Wilk was hiding in his cellar and that Mr. Steiner had suggested that Father take a couple of women with him if he wanted to go and speak to the Germans. "The cowards, the cowards!" Father fumed.

"You are not going alone to meet the Germans, are you?" I asked. "That's certain——"

"Nonsense," Father broke in. "Don't let us get melodramatic. I will go and speak to them." He changed into his Sunday suit. It was an odd thing to do.

His resolve was apparent. Mother and I knew it was useless to object. We watched him walking slowly up the highway, his back held as straight as his seventy years would permit. He disappeared around the bend. It seemed a long time before we saw him again.

He related how he had met the German patrol, who had hailed him and told him to put up his hands. An officer had come out from behind a clump of trees. His first words were "*Sind Sie Schlosser?*" ("Are you Schlosser?")

Father, thinking the man was inquiring about his occupation (*Schlosser*, literally, means locksmith), said, "No, a retired minister."

"No, no," interrupted the officer impatiently. "Is your name Schlosser?"

"My name is Peter Korwin."

"Well, what do you want?"

"I, as the oldest man left in this community, have come to tell you that few people are here—mostly women, children, and the sick. Our troops have withdrawn, and there is no one to resist you. Please spare the women and children. If you want a hostage, here I am."

The officer, evidently impressed by this display of courage, said, "We won't keep you. Go back and tell the others that no harm will come to anyone so long as no attempt is made to use arms against us. This is war, though, and I must give you fair warning. If one shot is fired at our troops, the village will be burned to the ground and all inhabitants killed."

"But who is Schlosser?" inquired Father of us. "Why were they asking about him?"

It was with some difficulty that we remembered a man by this name who had come to Bory seven or eight years ago. He was about sixty years old, a drab, quiet sort. He kept a

little grocery store, which didn't seem to be doing well. Evidently he was to usher in the invaders when the time came.

Towards evening several hundred German soldiers were installed in Bory. They were the brown-shirted Zips regiment—young, husky men with hard faces. The staff was quartered at the Wilks'. Two soldiers went around posting proclamations in Polish and German. These were signed by General von Brauchitsch. The inhabitants were summoned to give up all firearms on the threat of death and stay indoors from 5:00 P.M. until 7:00 A.M. All windows were to be darkened with blankets, and no lights to be visible from the outside.

Exhausted after the last six sleepless nights, we felt the animal relief of being able to lie down with no sounds of shooting to disturb us. Like the Germans, we expected any moment a counterattack by the Poles. It didn't seem probable that our troops could have withdrawn without a struggle. It wasn't until we saw more German troops pouring in from the north that we realized that any attempt at resistance on the part of our meager forces would have been impossible.

The next day I noticed that a boat had been left on the riverbank. I immediately thought of using it for crossing the river and inquiring about Lola Walczykowa and the Steiners. I walked cautiously down towards the water, not knowing whether the soldiers loitering on the banks would allow me to use the boat. One of them sat on the grass, holding a gun on his knees. Another was stretched out beside him, his head swathed in bandages. Several were crouched on flat stones, washing their clothes. Hesitantly I walked up to the one with the gun. I asked him in German—my voice was hardly more than a whisper—whether I could use the boat. He gruffly told me to go ahead, but looked as if he could not make up his mind whether to use the gun on me or not. The river was littered with piles and beams which had floated down from the blown-up bridges above. The boat was leaking, but I managed to push my way across.

Lola's house had been badly damaged by the explosions. All the windows were gone, many of them torn out with their

frames. Inside, floors were littered with plaster, ceilings were cracked, and the staircase had slipped some ten inches, shaken from its fastenings by the impact of air. I found Lola's mother and mother-in-law weeping brokenheartedly. Lola herself was dry-eyed, but her face was grim.

"I don't see how I can repair this," said Lola. "I have almost no money left."

"Maybe when Ir comes back," I suggested timidly.

"If he ever comes back," she blurted out.

From there I went to the Steiners'. Mrs. Steiner, fat and waddling in her pink kimono, her gray, straggly hair tied with a frayed ribbon, clasped me to her bosom.

"The beasts! The bandits! The robbers! Spoiling it all when things were going so nicely." (She was referring to her flourishing summer boarding house.) She spouted imprecations, while her husband tried to hush her. He was afraid that some German might overhear.

September 1939

by GAITHER

AFTER the panic-stricken exodus of vacationists from Bory and other summer resorts, Warsaw seemed refreshingly calm. I turned my attention to my missionary activities. Friday morning, September 1, on my way home from the bank, I stopped on the crowded sidewalk of Krolewska Street, to watch, like many others, a flight of Polish airplanes in the cloudless sky. Rolling and looping, they looked like playful swallows flashing through the air. As that very morning we had heard over the radio that Germany had attacked Poland, it was a comfort to see the Polish aviators practicing. Suddenly one of the machines swerved from its course, let out a spout of black smoke, and dived helplessly towards the earth. The

crowd froze in horror; in a flash we realized that we were witnessing the first air battle of the war.

With a heavy heart I turned home. Hania . . . Mimi . . . I had planned to return to them on Monday. Would I be able now to join them? What would they do without money or winter clothes? Lucky at least they were with Peter and Camilla in Bory. Then I thought of my father in Maryland. He would worry on reading the news from Poland.

I had never been in an invaded country before. How would war affect our daily life? What would become of my work? What chance had Poland to resist Germany? Poland had refused Germany's alluring offer to invade Russia together. Would the Soviet Union now come to Poland's assistance? I realized that I was caught in a mad vortex.

Members of our church and other friends rushed in for a hasty farewell as they left to join their regiments. Wives and mothers came for advice and a word of prayer. Michael Kosmiderski, the Methodist pastor in Bydgoszcz, arrived. He had left home Thursday night to come to our church headquarters in Warsaw for instructions in case war should break out. He happened to be on the first train strafed by the Luftwaffe. Separated from his wife, Lydia, he was plunged in despair until, unexpectedly, she appeared, having caught the last train out of Bydgoszcz.

Our apartment house in Warsaw—a modern, eight-story structure—was the property of our church, and it was known as the Methodist Building. It was located at the corner of Mokotowska Street and the Square of the Saviour. On the ground floor were several stores, including the English book-store, which was owned and operated by our church. On the second floor was our chapel, parish office, Epworth League hall, and small rooms used in church work. On the third floor were the offices and classrooms of the English Language College, which was financed and administered by our church. The other floors of the building consisted of apartments. Hania and I had an apartment on the fifth floor. The two women missionaries

from America, Ruth Lawrence and Ellen Newby, had one on the fourth floor. All other apartments were rented to outsiders.

I had to take over the duties of the manager of our English bookstore, who was called to his squadron; and the duties of the administrator of our building, who fled the city. German air raids and bombings caused many interruptions in my work. But I was too busy to worry.

On Sunday, September 3, I preached as usual in our chapel. As the service closed, several members rushed in, shouting with joy, "England has declared war on Germany! France will act any moment!" The future seemed less grim.

On Monday, Taddeus Goscicki, a friend of many years, phoned from the Hotel Bristol. "The officials of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have packed their files," he said. "They are fleeing the city." He was planning to leave with two American newspaper reporters who had a car, and asked me to come along. I told him I could not abandon my work. Several days later I was surprised to see him still in the capital. His plan of leaving with the reporters had fallen through.

The German air attacks increased in number and severity. The American Embassy notified us that a temporary consulate for American refugees had been opened in Brzesc-on-Bug, and urged all Americans left in Warsaw to flee there. I prevailed on Ruth Lawrence and Ellen Newby to leave. On Thursday night, after taking them to the railroad station, I returned home and turned on the radio. Communiqués brought alarming details of Poland's losing fight. There was one item which the speaker repeated every twenty minutes: "All able-bodied men of military age are hereby ordered by the Supreme Command of the Polish Army to leave Warsaw at once and gather at provincial capitals in the eastern part of the country. There they will be supplied with uniforms, military equipment, and instructions on their service in the armed forces. Citizens of Warsaw, leave at once!"

Many of our friends who had decided to obey this order were getting ready. Several came to my study and begged me to go with them, but I was undecided. About ten o'clock, I

went with Bruno, a young candidate for the ministry, to the roof, to watch the flashes from the battlefields. It was a warm night, the stars hung large and clear in a pale September sky, streaked from time to time by a shower of Perseids. To the South the horizon was lit up by the glow of fighting. Frequently the darkness was rent by the glare of flares. It was fascinating, but our apprehension grew, for the expanse of light seemed to be creeping closer.

"Look at the west," cried Bruno when he saw signs of battle in that direction. There were also indications of fighting to the north, towards Modlin. Suddenly an unexpected brightness lit up that part of the sky. We were being encircled.

Now my mind was made up. If we did not leave Warsaw that night, it would be too late. I told Bruno I was ready to go with him and the other young preachers. We groped our way down the dark stairway to my apartment to make final preparations. Since I had much to do before leaving, it was decided that the others would go at once on foot and that I would follow as soon as possible on Bruno's bicycle. We were to travel in the direction of Brzesc-on-Bug.

We said goodbye. Few words were spoken, but in spite of my Anglo-Saxon inhibitions I allowed the boys to kiss me on both cheeks in the traditional Polish fashion. They carried little packages of clothing and documents.

I raked feverishly through my church files and personal papers. There were pictures, letters, souvenirs, many of them dear to my heart. I could take only the most valuable. I couldn't help thinking that what I was leaving behind I would never see again. I packed what I had selected into a brief case. Then I rushed to the apartment, took a hot bath, and put on my best suit. I made a little bundle of toilet articles and a change of underwear. I was ready in less than an hour. I shook hands with the friends who had found a place of refuge in my apartment, and with Natalie, our maid. Christine, her face streaming with tears, kissed me. I descended into the pitch-black street and tied my light overcoat and the other articles to the bicycle.

The darkness was alive with the sound of hobnailed shoes, the clanking of arms, and the rumble of military trucks. Retreating columns of the Polish Army were heading east from the western front and crossing the Vistula. Not having ridden a bicycle for thirty years, I found it difficult. I was pushed into the gutter by the traffic, and I fell off the bicycle several times. Worming my way between long lines of commissary wagons, artillery pieces, and cavalry and foot soldiers, I kept wondering if I would be able to cross the Poniatowski Bridge, which had been bombed. When I reached it I was relieved to find it still usable. Once across the bridge, I was able to ride faster, for the number of refugees had decreased. On the wide macadam highway I began to pedal with growing confidence. Other cyclists swooshed by me in the dark in great spurts of speed. I noticed by the light of flares that most of them were wearing caps of various cycling clubs.

One friendly man, going a little slower than the rest, pedaled beside me for a while. Eyeing my felt hat, he asked, "What club do you belong to?"

"No club. I haven't been on a bicycle since I was a boy."

Without another word he left me.

Shortly afterwards I was stopped by Polish soldiers, who asked to see my papers. At the sight of my American passport they hastily waved me on. At that moment I realized that I had somewhere lost my precious brief case. I turned around and for half an hour searched the ground just covered. At last, giving up, I turned east and pushed on through the night. At a crossing I found the thoroughfare jammed with automobiles and army trucks. Suddenly four or five large cars, with shades pulled down, sped by. I recognized the limousines of the President, who, with his family and personal staff, was evidently fleeing the capital. Things must be bad if the head of the country was leaving. Filled with a premonition of tragedy, I slowly pushed over the sandy roads of Eastern Mazovia. The hours of that night were filled with sounds of shuffling feet and muffled voices, and with shadows, all moving east.

When day broke I saw that the roads were thronged with soldiers, in groups and singly, and with men, women, and children carrying bundles. Many were sitting in the ditches, eating out of paper bags or resting. The grassy slopes on both sides were strewed with suitcases and packs evidently abandoned by owners who had found them too heavy.

Suddenly I heard shouts. Bruno, Jan, Staszek, and the others who had preceded me from Warsaw jumped up from a log by the highway. I got off the bicycle, and with relief turned it over to Bruno, its owner.

An hour later we came to a railroad track where a puffing locomotive stood with several empty steel coal cars. As the train was eastbound, many refugees were climbing into the cars, and our group decided to follow their example. It was difficult to pull ourselves over the high sides, and Bruno had a lot of trouble with his bicycle. Once inside we glanced at one another and burst into laughter. Covered with coal dust, we looked like blackface comedians.

The train slowly chugged away. We were still in a state of elation over our good luck when it stopped. The sudden halt threw us against one another. Indignant, we looked over the side to see what was the matter and saw the engineer running away from his locomotive. Jan looked up and pointed to specks in the sky, and at that moment the air raid siren at the station let out a blood-curdling scream. We realized that this was one of the times when there are only two kinds of people—the quick and the dead. With the agility of alley cats we scrambled over the sides of our car, not neglecting to take the bicycle with us. Frantically we looked around. To the right of the station were homes surrounded by a thick grove of trees. We dashed towards one of these houses, cleared the fence, and threw ourselves on the ground among the bushes in the yard. The planes were now roaring overhead. The singing of the bombs was followed by heavy explosions. Not yet experienced in air raids, we started back to the train after the noise had subsided. This time we were lucky, for the Germans had really gone, and the all-clear signal was sounded as we

approached the station. The engine and the cars of our train were a jumbled heap of metal. One bomb had exploded on the rails and had twisted them into weird shapes.

Realizing that travel by rail was unhealthy, we continued on foot. We stopped in Minsk for a hot meal of Polish sausage and boiled potatoes. We ate heartily, smacking our lips over the thick gravy. It was to be the last decent meal I was to have for a long time.

We continued eastward. Not far beyond Minsk I hired a farmer with a four-wheeled wagon drawn by a thin, shaggy horse to take us to Siedlce, the nearest town. Sitting on hay-stuffed seats, we rode in luxury. But before long we took so many fugitives into our wagon, the horse could hardly pull it.

We passed untold numbers of refugees. Many were bare-footed. As the Polish peasants usually do in summer, they carried their shoes in their hands to be put on before they approached a town. Most of them were young men, fair and blue-eyed. They were obeying the command of the Polish Government to flee to where they could find mobilization centers. I was amazed that these men had not been called earlier to their regiments. Later I learned that Poland had delayed her mobilization at the request of London and Paris, who had feared it might irritate Germany.

Our horse was plodding slowly along when one of our party yelled and gestured towards the sky. Three Stukas were approaching with a tremendous roar. We leaped to the ground. My hat flew off, and before I realized how I had got there, I was lying in a newly plowed field, pressing my head down into the soft earth. Like the ostrich, I felt a great sense of security whenever I could hide my face in the earth. Somehow, legs and the rest of the body seemed utterly unimportant during a bombing.

Soon came the scream of a bomb, and then the explosion. It must have hit very close, for we were covered with earth. We lay motionless and, out of the corner of our eyes, watched the planes as they banked sharply and came back to look over their target. I raised my head slightly—and saw a German

aviator firing a machine gun straight at me. The bullets, with a sharp ping, buzzed and splashed near by. My body felt suddenly soft and unprotected. Every bullet seemed to pass through some part of me. In a flash I understood how an animal might feel when cornered by a hunter, and a revulsion against hunting came over me. As a healthy American boy, I had spent many a day wandering through the countryside with a shotgun in my hands, but now I would never be able to hunt again.

Satisfied that the German planes would not reappear, we picked ourselves up from the ground and dusted off our clothes. My new suit didn't look so good after contact with a coal car and a plowed field. I made sure that none of the boys who had left Warsaw with me had been hit. But one of the refugees whom we had taken into our wagon was still on the ground, near the crater of the first bomb. I helped him get up and found he had not been wounded. Without a word he gripped my arm with the strength of a steel vise. His fingers dug into my flesh, and I winced with the pain, but he wouldn't release his hold and seemed not to hear what we were saying. I shook my arm, and his hand shook with it. Like a pair of Siamese twins we got back into the wagon, and for nearly two hours I was virtually his prisoner. It wasn't until somebody shouted again, "Here come the planes," that something clicked in his mind and he dropped my arm.

Once more we raced for cover and hid in a small grove of trees by the roadside. This time the sky seemed full of German planes. Several detached themselves and went south and east. Some remained, circling in our vicinity. We decided our grove was too conspicuous and ran to a forest near by. We couldn't have picked a worse place. Polish soldiers were hiding there, and they fired their rifles at the German planes. As a result our forest was an object of attack.

Somehow we did not especially mind the bombs, which shook the trees and the ground around us, but we dreaded the machine-gun fire with which the airplanes—they seemed to come down to the very treetops—sprayed us. We pressed

against the trunks of the trees and crawled under bushes, sometimes trying to hide behind a tree only three or four inches thick. Ping, ping, ping, went the bullets through the foliage.

When the planes came from one side only, we would shift behind the trees, feeling at least partly protected. But when they divided and fired at us from several directions, we would sit on the ground, utterly helpless, and listen to the bullets ping against the leaves. Several refugees were shot during that raid, but none of my companions was hit.

That evening we came to a village. We were very hungry, but there was no food left in the stores. After a long search we were fortunate enough to find a peasant who sold us some black bread and milk. We had been on the road now for thirty-six hours and felt very tired. The peasant led us to his barn and told us that we could sleep on the hay. Covering ourselves with our overcoats, we fell into a sleep of exhaustion.

But we did not rest quietly. All night long, hordes of refugees poured through the village. Like us, many were too weary to go farther, and it seemed they all found their way to our barn. Flashlights shot in our eyes. People stumbled over us, shoved and pushed us until we were crowded into one corner. Every inch of space seemed to be taken, but more and more kept coming in. Swearing and arguing began. Strange men and women laid down their packs on our legs and backs, and, slumping on them, went to sleep propped on top of us. This had its advantages, for it turned bitterly cold before morning, and we were glad of that blanket of human bodies. When day came, it was like the resurrection of the dead. People, looking more lifeless than alive, stretched, groaned, and unbent stiffened limbs. Eyes glazed by fatigue traveled with a blank stare over the unfamiliar scene. We washed at the pump, had breakfast of bread and milk, and trudged on eastward.

At dusk we arrived in Siedlce, shortly after an air raid. The town was an inferno of flames. Dead bodies and severed limbs littered the main street. I stumbled over a round object. What

I thought was a head of cabbage turned out to be a human head.

For two weeks we fled before the advancing German Army, trying to hide from the Death on Wings. During these long, weary days we acquired a peculiar technique: we learned to run and fall and flatten ourselves on the ground, to become inconspicuous with our faces pressed into the mud of fields and ditches. We remembered that stations and railroads, medium-sized towns, villages, and woods, were dangerous hiding places.

The German fliers evidently had received orders to destroy all life on Polish soil. Every object that moved, every peasant, every woman and child, every cow and horse—all were ruthlessly fired at. Thousands of fleeing refugees were bombed on the highways. There seemed to be inexhaustible supplies of incendiary bombs to be dumped on villages; countless rounds of ammunition to be spent over Poland.

One day I became separated from my comrades. Suddenly I heard the drone of an approaching airplane. Well trained by then, I threw myself flat in a ditch by the roadside. I looked up. It was a peaceful scene. Dark trees, a sunny meadow, a country road, and the silvery wings of a plane in a clear September sky. What a subject for an artist! Then I heard the burst of machine-gun fire. As no bullets whizzed by me, I raised my head cautiously to see what the target might be. Down the meadow a herd of Guernsey cattle was grazing. As I watched, one cow crumpled, her rump heaved upward, her tail switched wildly, and she rolled over on the ground. A little peasant boy guarding the cattle gaped at the plane. All at once he threw his hands across his middle, and without a sound slumped forward. The plane continued gracefully on its course. I ran to the boy where he lay, his knees drawn up to his chest. There was a look of childish surprise on his round face.

Did this flier of the Luftwaffe make a complete and detailed report back at his base? Did he itemize the achievements of this day? One Guernsey cow, one peasant child—

I rejoined my companions, and we plodded on slowly

towards the Bug River. Sunday morning, while resting under a tree, I watched the people pouring out of a little church after High Mass. They were a mixture of refugees and village folk. They did not immediately disperse, but gathered around a tall, gaunt man who began to speak in low, measured tones. A woman sitting near me said, "He is a teacher from Warsaw."

There was greatness and pathos in this dust-covered man, who was trying to pour hope and courage into broken hearts. Slowly his voice grew louder, his words more impassioned until, stretching out his arms towards heaven, he called upon Mary, the mother of our Saviour, "As you saved us from the Bolshevik hordes in 1920, so save us now from the German barbarians. O Mary, perform another miracle of the Vistula."

While he prayed, the people stood with upraised faces, looking intently into the sky. Then they scattered. I wondered: Does God act in this way to save nations and people? It seemed too easy a solution to man's responsibility in this world. I ached with pity for these people who, with childlike expectancy, awaited a miracle.

We were buying some half-ripe apples from a peasant late in the afternoon, when a refugee caught up with us. He had been running and was out of breath. He told us that the German Army was advancing rapidly, that it soon would be entering this village, that we must leave at once if we were to cross the Bug. We were sure this river would be the ultimate line of retreat for the Poles. And so we continued our journey with one thought: On to the Bug.

Our blistered and swollen feet made us flinch at every step. We were tempted to take off our shoes. It would have been a relief to let burning soles tread on cool, dew-drenched grass. But it would not have been wise, since we were unaccustomed to walking barefooted.

With the coming of darkness we saw bright bursts of fire which heralded the approach of German tanks from our left. We hurried on towards Brzesc-on-Bug. All night long we went on and on, over hard-surfaced roads and across sandy fields and muddy ditches, and finally reached the river.

But Polish troops stationed around the bridgeheads refused to let us cross. Not wanting to be caught between two opposing armies, we turned south in an effort to make the next bridge, which meant another four or more hours of hiking. When we came to a sandy plateau, we could hardly drag our weary feet along. It was a rough stretch: Bruno, cheerful as ever, chuckled and said: "It's hard sledding for us, but I bet it will hold up the German tanks also."

In the early hours of the morning we reached the Bug again and found our bridge. Masses of people were pushing towards it, all trying to cross. Long columns of Polish supply trains and artillery units were obstructing the road. The closer we got to the bridge, the worse grew the medley. Shouts and cries filled the air. Distraught men and women were searching in the multitude for loved ones. "Daddy, Daddy," a little boy whimpered; then suddenly he shrieked, "Mother! Where are you, Mother?" Two little girls, clutching their rag dolls, were sobbing wildly. My heart contracted. I thought of Hania and Mimi. Were they also tramping some dusty road? Was Mimi crying, like these children, lost in a panic-stricken crowd?

It was difficult for our group to keep together, and when I reached the other side of the river, only Bruno and Staszek were with me. Not daring to remain too close to the bridge, we struck out for the next village to the east.

The German Army left safely behind, we slackened our pace. From now on our greatest concern was food. The peasants in this area, many of them Ruthenians, were none too anxious to help. Maybe they hadn't much left to sell. The Polish Army and hosts of fleeing refugees had passed through here during the preceding weeks. Like locusts and grasshoppers, the half-starved fugitives had eaten everything within their reach, while the appalled villagers saw their supplies diminishing. Naturally they did not greet us with smiles. They turned deaf ears to our pleas. But hunger made us persistent.

Looking at the hundreds of refugees trudging through the village, I felt that an attempt to get food would be useless. Not so my comrades. They had grown up in a similar village

and knew peasant psychology. Bruno said mildly, "If there is any food left here, we'll get some. Just keep quiet and do whatever we do." He was afraid my accent would disclose that we were not country people.

He turned into the yard of the first peasant house. He knocked on the door and, not waiting to be invited, opened it and walked in. We followed him into a passage crowded with harnesses, butter churns, pails, and farm implements—then into the *izba*, which is the kitchen, bedroom, and living room of every peasant home. No one was there, and we sat down on a long bench running the length of one wall. In complete silence we waited. Some fifteen minutes later, a peasant woman entered and, seeing us, said, without showing surprise, "May Jesus Christ be praised."

"Forever and ever, amen," we replied in unison.

The woman went calmly about her work, paying not the least attention to us. She poured the milk she had brought into crocks, then crouched in front of the kitchen stove and started to make a fire. Suddenly she lifted her eyes from the kindling she was breaking up and asked, "Where are you from?"

"Oh, down the road a piece," replied Bruno vaguely.

"My, my," sighed the peasant woman, and continued her evening chores.

I sat still, afraid to open my mouth, hunger gnawing at my stomach.

A tall peasant came in, with a fur cap on his head. "May Jesus Christ be praised," he said.

"Forever and ever, amen," we intoned.

Indifferently he turned from us and busied himself at the back of the room. The *izba* was darkening with the dusk. My hungry stomach was rumbling rebelliously, and I compressed it with both hands. The woman said, "You must be kind of hungry, what?"

"Well, not so bad," lied Bruno.

"You must have a bite with us," she said.

"Hm, I guess we can, if you insist," added Staszek, elaborately yawning to show his indifference.

Tantalizing odors drifted through the darkness. When finally a kerosene lamp was placed on the table, it shone on a huge bowl of steaming *kluski* (noodles), thick hunks of black bread, and bowls of clabber. The woman disappeared and returned with a lump of golden-yellow butter on a plate. Silently she motioned us to the table. Our hosts sat down, crossing themselves with a wide gesture. We did likewise, not wanting to be mistaken for atheists. The peasant motioned to us with his spoon, and we all fell to. Hardly a word was spoken until the last crumb had been consumed. After wiping our lips with the backs of our hands and making loud, smacking noises of appreciation, we thanked our hosts. We chatted for a while, then were invited to spend the night.

The *gospodarz* (farmer) led us across the passage to the *komora* (the good room), which is entered only a few times a year, on occasions of births, deaths, or great festivity. He kindly invited us to sleep on the three beds, which were piled to the very ceiling with enormous snow-white feather beds and pillows. We declined, not wanting to abuse their hospitality. The host, in very friendly fashion, urged us thereupon to take the choicest sleeping quarters, that is, the top of the great brick oven in the first room. Knowing that place would be warm and protected from cold drafts, I was on the verge of accepting when Staszek kicked my shins to attract my attention. He whispered that it would be infested with vermin. We declined again. The *gospodarz* finally lighted a lantern and led us to the barn, where each of us dug a private foxhole in the hay. Warm, full, and relatively content, we slept till morning. Breakfast, consisting of hot milk and black bread, was urged on us before we continued on our journey. In this way I acquired a precious technique for begging.

Sitting in the stableyard of a large estate near the Bug one morning, I took off my shoes and rested my swollen feet. One of the many refugees aimlessly wandering around the farm buildings came over and sat down beside me. He said his name was Miller and that his father owned a factory in Warsaw. When he found that I was an American and a pastor, he pro-

posed that I join him. He took me to his Chrysler, a new five-passenger sedan. His liveried chauffeur gave me the once-over. Then his wife came up—a smartly dressed, sharp-featured blonde. She took in, one by one, my worn shoes, baggy trousers, grimy shirt, dusty hat, and week's growth of beard. She could not conceal her distaste when her husband urged that I flee with them to the nearest border. Though the invitation was tempting, I was unwilling to part with Bruno and Staszek. But these two friends thought it would be best for me to accept Miller's offer. I gave Staszek a bicycle I had bought from a refugee on the estate where we were stranded. Thus Bruno and Staszek, each with a bicycle, had a chance to reach their home near the Latvian border before the Germans made it impossible. We parted like brothers, embracing and kissing one another on the cheeks.

After my weary weeks of tramping, the luxury of Miller's Chrysler was unbelievable. The back was crammed with expensive luggage, hatboxes, jewel cases, and five luxurious fur coats. My small bundle and rumpled topcoat were added to the pile. The chauffeur, Mrs. Miller, and I rode in the front seat, Miller behind with the baggage. My host had insisted on this arrangement, maybe because of my leanness, maybe because of my disreputable appearance. After all, who wouldn't keep a tramp as far as possible from mink coats and jewelry?

Our plan was to reach Wilno and proceed from there to Lithuania. For three hours we made good time, traveling north on a fine highway. We were interrupted several times by brief air raids. Gradually our progress was slowed down by steadily increasing numbers of vehicles and pedestrians until we reached a bottleneck at an important crossroads some distance east of Brzesc-on-Bug. Tanks, army cars, trucks, and supply wagons crowded the roads and adjoining fields. A Polish officer barred our way.

"You can't go north. The Germans have already cut the road fifteen miles from here."

I flashed my American passport, thinking he was only bluffing.

"All right! You can go if you want to. But as a friend of Americans, I advise you to take the road to the east."

I felt he was telling the truth. Our party went into a huddle. Rumania seemed now the only way of escape, but could we get the gasoline to reach the border? Having decided the chance was worth taking, we turned southeast for Kowel, drove at top speed, and shortly after noon reached that provincial capital. No sooner had we arrived than the air raid siren gave its warning. We parked our car by the side of the road and hastily crawled out to sit in a ditch. Mrs. Miller was composed. She had grabbed a box containing sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs, and in the ditch she took the occasion to serve lunch. Not having had anything since breakfast, I was disappointed to receive as my share only one tiny sandwich and one egg. When the all-clear signal was sounded we continued our journey, and at about half-past five we entered the city of Luck.

Luck was another provincial capital. I was impressed by the large number of fine, modern buildings, and by the cleanliness and order in a city so close to the advancing enemy. We had trouble driving into the city, since the roads were blocked by deep antitank ditches, with only a narrow space left to be blown up at the last moment. The streets swarmed with Polish soldiers and refugees, so that we pushed our way to the main square slowly. When Miller said he would look up the local agent of his father's factory to see if he could get gasoline, I decided to find a barbershop. Maybe a shave, a haircut, and a shampoo would lessen the discrepancy between my appearance and the elegance of my hosts. Leaving my bundle and coat in the car, I turned towards the center of the city.

"Don't be long! Remember we have to make the Rumanian border early tomorrow morning," Miller called after me.

I came across several barbershops, but all were closed. Seeing that I would have to shave myself, I went into a store and bought a few indispensable toilet articles. The salesman packed them neatly in a small cardboard box, which I tucked under my arm. My search for a barber and shopping having taken a fairly

long time, I hurried back to the car. In order to save time, I made what I thought would be a short cut. This proved one of the greatest mistakes of my life. As I turned the corner of a large building, I almost collided with a distinguished-looking Polish officer. His eyes traveled over me suspiciously, then stopped at seeing the box under my arm.

"What do you have there?"

"A box of toilet articles."

"Where are you from, anyway?"

I produced my passport, explaining that I lived in Warsaw.

"Come along with me," he ordered, and marched me into a near-by building.

There I was told that I had been arrested by the commander—in person—of the Polish troops in that district. Several officers sprang forward with questions and reports. Busy as he was, he did not neglect to keep an eye on me. In a little while I was led into a small room, hardly more than a closet, that had no window, no chair. I leaned against the wall, wondering how long I would be kept there and whether Miller and his Chrysler would wait for me. I could imagine Mrs. Miller saying to her husband in her clipped, tight-lipped way, "Don't let's wait another minute. We can't waste any more time on that seedy American pastor of yours. I never liked him anyway."

After what seemed an endless time, the Commander called me back into his office and made a cursory examination of my passport. He took the few American dollars I carried in it, saying, "It's against the law to have foreign currency in Poland."

I knew this, but in these days of war I had found that American money was the best means of exchange.

The Commander questioned me on my goal, my itinerary, and my past. He was especially anxious to find out why and how I happened to be in Luck. A clerk wrote out in longhand all the statements I made. The officer said rather casually, "Unless you have a better explanation, or can find a witness to corroborate your statements, you will be shot at sunrise."

This was a jolt. Until now, in spite of my arrest, I had had no misgivings.

"You will have an opportunity—the car and these Miller people." He sent me back into my cubbyhole.

Some years before I had seen a movie film entitled, "Shot at Sunrise." It was a featherweight comedy, and I remembered having laughed at it a great deal. But this was an entirely different affair. There was nothing amusing about having a stern officer bark out, "You will be shot at sunrise." At first I was too scared to concentrate. By and by I grew calm and began to think in a more connected way. Hania, Mimi, Father back in Maryland, were uppermost in my mind. If I could only let Hania know what had happened. I had a horror of her waiting through the years, wondering what had become of me. I remembered reading that men in similar circumstances wrote messages on bits of paper, hoping that someone would find them and send them on to their families. I took a piece of note-paper out of my pocket and scribbled a message to Hania. Fragments of a conversation drifted in from the Commander's office. An adjutant was saying that Colonel Ciazynski wished to report to the Commander on the phone. This name startled me. I knew Ciazynski and had heard that he was serving with his regiment in the east of Poland. Impulsively I stepped into the office. The Commander was listening at the phone. I interrupted, begging him to ask Ciazynski to confirm my identity, but the Commander got red in the face at this insubordination and shouted, "Get back in your room."

I retreated but continued to listen. The Commander was talking now to someone else, who was reporting from a different sector of the front.

"How many did you say you had?"

"_____"

"Have you given all of them a careful examination and trial according to regulations?"

Evidently the answer was in the affirmative, for he concluded, with finality, "Then take them out, prepare the graves, and shoot them."

After a while a soldier appeared and said to me, "Come on, brother, we are going to look for your car."

I directed him towards the place where I had left the Millers. He was friendly, and wanted to hear my story. "You're in a tough spot," he said. "I'll help you all I can."

When we got to the square the Chrysler was gone: it must have been well on its way to Rumania. I looked at the space where it had been, and my guard, obviously sorry for me, whistled.

Suddenly, as clearly as if the words had been painted in figures of fire on the black of the night, the name, house number, and street address of the man Miller had mentioned just before we parted appeared to me. This was his father's local agent, and Miller had hoped to get gas for the journey from him. I shouted to my guard, "Come along! Take me to No. 6 Mostowa Street. A man lives there who knows Miller."

A woman admitted us, and when I explained my predicament, she said that her husband was out. But a man spoke up from the next room and immediately came out. "Now, George," said the woman, "you are not leaving this house tonight. I won't have you get mixed up in this spy business."

I cast a helpless look at my guard, and he gave me a wink of complicity. He stepped forward briskly, grabbed George by the arm, and, between the two of us, we bore off our prey. The man was husky and not easy to handle, but my guard knew just where to prick with his bayonet to keep him trotting. Once out of earshot of his wife, George said angrily, "Quit tickling my kidneys. Why do you have to march me this way? I was coming with you."

At the office we found a group of officers waiting for us. I gathered that they were to assist in my trial. The judge was a young, intelligent-looking captain. George, to whom Miller had fortunately spoken of me, told his story. Then I heard the decision: "You are free." The Commander, however, was not pleased with the outcome and told me gruffly that a record of the case would go into the army files, and a certain suspicion would always remain against me. The young judge called me

aside and said in a kindly manner, "If I were you, I'd get out of this town as soon as possible."

It was half-past nine. I stumbled out into the dark street and headed for the high school, where, I had been told, the billeting of refugees was taken care of. Walking up the steps, I passed several figures coming down. I entered a classroom presided over by a tired-looking schoolteacher. It was illuminated by an oil lamp that was smoking. The windows were blacked out with dark paper. The school desks were piled with bundles, and people were leaning against them in poses of complete exhaustion. Five or six were ahead of me, so I sat down at a desk. I was hungry, worn out, and nervously exhausted. My turn came at last.

"Name, age, profession, home address, and nationality?"

The teacher picked out a card from a file and wrote an address on a slip. He handed it to me, saying, "These people will give you a bed for tonight."

The name on the card—Aaron Knobloch—was Jewish. Where in the world was Matejki Street? A policeman gave me elaborate directions. My quarters were located at the edge of the town, and I had a long walk. People were scurrying by me, but I could see only their outlines. After making several turns I realized that I was lost. The streets were narrow and crooked, and I could not tell where one block ended and another began. Hearing footsteps, I spoke up, "Could you tell me how to find Matejki Street?"

"Why, this is Matejki Street."

"And where would No. 12 be?"

"About three or four blocks down."

I groped on towards my goal. When I felt sure I had reached the right house, I struck one of my few matches and peered at the number plate. No. 8. I skipped one house and walked up to the next, but this was 10A—denoting, as is often done in Poland, an unanticipated house built between two houses of established numbers. With confidence I approached the next house and felt for the number with my fingers. After

the numeral "1" I could trace a "2"—and I had a feeling of great relief.

I rapped smartly on the door. No answer. I rapped again and shouted hello. My voice echoed down the deserted street. I walked to the side of the house and found a gate in the picket fence. I ventured into the back yard, hoping there were no dogs. I felt for the windows and pounded on each heavy shutter and on the back door. No sign of life came from the dark house.

Determined to find a bed for the night, I started back to the high school building.

Suddenly a sharp cry rang out. "*Stoj!*"

I halted as ordered, and the glare of a flashlight blinded me. "What are you doing out this time of night?"

I tried to explain, but my words were cut short. "You are under arrest. Come with me."

The minuteman grabbed me by the arm, marched me briskly down the street. When we got to the headquarters of the local Home Guard, I saw that he had, like many other young men on duty there, an armband and a rifle. These men supplemented the regular army and police in patrolling the city and guarding against thieves and saboteurs. I was taken into a dimly lighted room crowded with civilians, most of whom were dozing. An older man, seated behind a table littered with documents, asked me the usual questions in a curt, gruff manner, but when he saw my passport he gripped my hand in a hearty clasp. "An American! Do sit down."

He told me of the many relatives he had in the United States, and showered me with questions about Detroit, Hamtramck, and Pittsburgh. So I talked about these places and about Milwaukee and Buffalo and New York until fatigue overcame me and my head fell forward in the middle of a sentence. He leaped up and said to the young man who had arrested me, "Stefan, take this gentleman back to the house he was looking for, and see that he gets the best they have there. He must have a good night's rest."

On the way back to Matejki Street, I tried to persuade my

guide that it was no use, that the house was deserted. "You leave it to me," he said. "I'll find somebody there."

At No. 12 my guardian banged on the front door, then went to the back door and hammered it with the butt of his gun until the boards cracked. The din was terrific. At last a sound came from within, and the bolts were cautiously pulled back.

"What is it? What do you want?" a guttural voice inquired.

"Home Guard! I have with me a refugee, and I want the best bed in your house for him."

"I have no room. Tonight I have taken in three sent down from headquarters, and my house is full of relatives who have fled from the country."

The young Home Guard yanked the door open, shoved the man aside, and strode into the house. I followed. He snapped on his flashlight, and it revealed several people sleeping on the floor. The air was foul. We picked our way over sleeping figures into another room, which was also full of people. My guide walked to one of the beds and used the butt of his gun to rustle two girls out of it. They grumbled in Yiddish and ran out in long white nightgowns. Stefan said to me, "You get in this bed. The captain wants you to have a good night's rest."

I pulled off my shoes and trousers and crawled into the still warm bed. I asked the men who were lying in another bed where I might buy some bread the next morning. They told me that if I got up early and was among the first in line, I might try the bakery around the corner, which opened at 5:00 A.M.

When I woke up it was twenty minutes to five. I pulled on my trousers, and with my shoes in my hands tiptoed to the back door. Two white figures rushed for my bed. I didn't wait to thank my unwilling host.

The smell of freshly baked bread guided me to the bakery. Already people were standing in line. A small loaf of dark bread, still warm from the oven, was handed to me. I walked down the street, cutting pieces with my pocket knife, and munching happily.

That morning I was in the city square when the air-raid

siren started its wail. The streets were jammed with refugees, but cleared rapidly. I followed the air-shelter sign to the basement of the cathedral of the Orthodox Church. In a huge hall that ran the whole length of the edifice were two or three thousand people, mostly women and children. Many put their packets and blankets on the cement floor and lay down. Others paced the floor. The children played. One little girl was showing others how to hop on one leg.

We heard the drone of approaching German planes. It increased to a roar as they passed overhead. The scream and explosion of bombs made me remember that churches were a preferred target. One of the first commands that governed the life of a fugitive was: Don't choose a church as an air-raid shelter. The all-clear signal came soon.

I went to call on Miller's agent, but found his house closed up. His neighbor invited me to rest in her back yard with a group of oddly assorted people. Then another air raid occurred. I crouched under a back porch with two other men, and watched the German planes come down low over the city. An antiaircraft gun started firing. It was the first I had heard in several weeks. In a little while the raid was over, and we went back to our pine chairs, sunlight, and conversation.

Shortly before noon a tall, gaunt woman came into our yard. She stared at me. There was something so strange about her eyes that I was glad when she moved on and disappeared in the next house. A little later a boy with an intelligent, kindly face came out of that house. He came up to me and said, "My mother invites you to have dinner with us, if you will be so kind."

I followed him and was introduced to his parents and his brother. When I was left alone with the boys they explained that their mother, who had been mentally ill for some time, had seen in me a resemblance to a son who had died.

After dinner she invited me to bathe my swollen feet. On the pine floor of the kitchen she had a basin of hot water. When she saw my socks were full of holes, she brought a clean pair, carefully darned.

They invited me to stay with them, but I felt compelled to continue eastward. In the days that followed I thought many times of the happy hours spent in this modest home and wished that I had accepted their invitation to remain.

It was seven in the evening when I left Luck. Experience had taught me that the best time for traveling was at night, since bombings ceased at dusk. Trains were running, so I headed for the railroad station about a mile out of the city. Many others were going there. At the station a crowd of refugees was milling around in the dark. No one knew anything about the trains. A railroad man whom I got hold of said the last train had gone east the day before, and he didn't think any more could pass. The roadbed had been badly bombed not far from the station, and no repairs were being made. I trudged back to town. On the way I fell into step with a young man, a state's attorney from the city of Lodz. Finding him a pleasant companion, I invited him to accompany me to Rowne. He agreed to go with me, but when we got back in the city and took the main highway to the east, he jumped on a passing army truck. As a government official, he was sure he would be accommodated.

I set out alone. I passed through the dark suburbs of Luck. When I had left the last houses behind, I was in the peaceful Volhynian countryside. The night was warm and clear, the sky studded with stars. Despite my weariness and hunger, I succumbed to the spell of Volhynia. I thought of the Asiatic hordes that had burned and pillaged this land; of the almost legendary Polish knights who had lived and hunted hereabout and whose armor-clad bodies had formed a living rampart for civilized Europe against successive waves of Muscovites, Tatars, and Turks; of generations of peaceful, industrious Polish farmers, whom this rich black earth had nurtured.

Many automobiles passed me. The occupants of one car asked me, in a strange accent, "Is this the road to Rowne?" Finding that I was a refugee and a stranger in this region, they hurried off.

The deepening night brought strange sensations. The trees

seemed to move with me. Sometimes they drew nearer, barring my way with phantomlike arms; sometimes they receded, letting me pass. When I had to cross a small stream that was full of reflected starlight, the water seemed to murmur as if warning me of danger. My palms burned with fever. My head swam. My legs moved of their own volition. I walked and walked.

This trance was suddenly broken when I overtook two rough-looking men. Without any reason a feeling of danger gripped me. I hastened by and broke into a run, stopping from time to time to listen if they were coming after me.

Hour after hour I walked on until I could go no farther. Then I looked around for a haystack under which I could sleep. When I saw a dark shadow in a field, I stumbled towards it, not caring whether it was a haystack or a manure pile. I fell against it, and was asleep instantly.

But my sleep was filled with nightmares. A creature with arms like an octopus was approaching. Its tentacles were weaving closer and closer to my head. With an effort I opened my eyes. In broad daylight I saw a man bending over me, reaching for my throat. I leaped to my feet.

"Who are you?" the man asked savagely.

"From up the road," I gasped out. Then I darted across the field.

That afternoon I approached the city of Klewan, in which I planned to await developments. Not having eaten since the previous day, I looked for a restaurant. On the main street I entered an inn and got a glass of hot tea, which greatly refreshed me.

Like many towns in the eastern part of Poland, Klewan was inhabited by many Jews. They all seemed to be out on the streets—the married women in wigs of hair or velvet, the men in full beards, side curls, long black coats, and traditional hats.

Reared in a small American town, I had never thought, before coming to Poland, of Jews as being different, except in religion, from others in the community. In Poland, where they formed nearly 10 per cent of the population, I found them a

separate people with a culture of their own. Their religion, language, customs, and garb were all a part of a tradition guarded with jealous pride and handed down unchanged through generations. Except for doctors, lawyers, and others in the professional class, the Polish Jew saw to it that no one mistook him for anything but a Jew.

"What is going on today?" I asked the innkeeper. "Why are these crowds on the streets?"

"People are scared. There are reports that the Soviet Army is concentrating on the border."

I went outside and talked with some Jewish housewives sitting on a doorstep. They were nervous. No one knew just what would happen. We heard singing. Some peasants coming down the street were carrying red banners. Most of them were young men and girls.

"What are they singing?" I asked.

"The Internationale."

"Who are these peasants?"

Someone explained that they were the inhabitants of a near-by Ruthenian village, known for the last ten years as a Communist center. The marchers sang and shouted excitedly. But I heard no expressions of Communist sympathy from the other peasants who thronged the streets.

From the east came a large truck that slowly pushed its way through the crowd. It was filled with workmen who shouted and waved red banners showing the hammer and sickle. Two men who were dressed differently from the others on the truck attracted my attention.

"They are delegates from the Soviet Union," said a man beside me.

Speeches were made from the truck. The language must have been Ukrainian. I could not wholly understand it. When the speakers had finished, the truck moved off. The crowd followed but without a show of enthusiasm. Instinctively I felt that Klewan was not a safe place for me, and I set out for the country.

That night I slept on a wide bench in a peasant's home. It

would have been comfortable, but for the fleas. The next morning I continued eastward, joining the refugees. Among us were civilians; postmen, firemen, and police, distinguishable by their uniforms; here and there a private separated from his regiment.

Suddenly we noticed refugees coming towards us. How did they happen to be going west? One of them, a Polish soldier, shouted, "Where are you going?"

"Headed east," I replied.

"Man alive! Haven't you heard? The Soviet Army has crossed our border and is coming to help us. We are going west to fight the Germans."

So the Red Army had come to help the Poles! Forgetting the Russo-German nonaggression pact of August 23, I shouted the joyful news to others. Excitement was great, but reactions varied.

"I don't believe they are coming to help us," one civilian exclaimed.

"You're crazy, man," another answered him heatedly. "What would the Russians mean fighting against us and helping Germany? They're not fools."

Confusion grew. The number of refugees going westward increased rapidly. People shouted at us, "Turn around. The Soviet Army is coming. We must flee."

A Polish officer came dashing up on a motorcycle with a sidecar. An officer going eastward on foot stopped him and asked, "Why are you going west?"

"Because the Soviet Army has invaded Poland. The frontier has been crossed at many points. A large detachment is already in Rowne."

I was fascinated by what I saw in the sidecar. There sat a woman, evidently the Major's wife, clutching a strange collection of animals and personal belongings. A small dog was curled in her lap. A cat's head protruded from under her left arm. Two green lovebirds were in a birdcage. Parcels and bundles surrounded her.

More and more eastward-fleeing refugees turned in their

tracks. People who, in three weeks, had crossed on foot the entire width of Poland, now, like trapped animals, began to flee back.

In an hour or two the road cleared. No more refugees came from the east, and those who had been going with me had turned back. I was left alone. I put my hand in my pocket and felt my passport. The contact reassured me. As a citizen of a neutral country I would be treated right by the Russians. Driven on by a desire for food and rest, I continued towards the eastern border.

In the early afternoon I came across peasants sitting by the side of the road, most of them children and young girls. One of the few men asked me, "Have you heard the news?"

"Of course; and what are you waiting here for?"

"They say the Soviet Army is coming up the road, and we are waiting to see it."

Far down the highway I presently saw dark objects come over the ridge.

"That's it," I said to myself, and, with my heart beating thickly, I sat down behind a little group of peasant girls. They looked fearfully down the road. Several of them held—like a conciliatory offering—small bunches of field flowers in their hands. We heard clanking in the distance. Then the first tank came over the hill. From the open turret a grim-faced officer, his arms folded, stared down the road. When he reached our group, he silently raised his clenched fist in salutation. The tank clanked by. In the second machine a merry-faced soldier grinned and waved his hand at us. He, alone, seemed to enjoy the invasion. For the next fifteen minutes we watched in silence while a long detachment of tanks passed on its westward course.

I stretched out on the grass beside three Ukrainian peasants. "What do you think about this?" I asked.

But they did not wish to put themselves on record in front of a stranger. Two of the men got up and left. The remaining one said with a friendly smile, "I see you are not a local man."

"No, I am an American."

"How in the world did you ever get here?"

"I'm a refugee from Warsaw."

"My father is an American citizen," the peasant said. "He is living in the United States. He is in a hospital for disabled American soldiers."

I told him of some of my recent experiences, but our conversation was interrupted by another detachment of Soviet tanks. After they had passed by, my new acquaintance grew confidential. "I don't like it," he said. "We Ukrainians who have our own little farms are not happy over this invasion."

He invited me to his home, which was not far from the highway. His farm and buildings were in good condition. He had a fine barn, which his father had put up with funds brought from America. He took pleasure in showing me about, and I displayed great interest—because the place looked like a good prospect for a meal and a bed. He led me to a haystack and with pride uncovered an almost new automobile hidden under the hay. Some refugees had run out of gas not far from his farm, and they had traded him their car for a horse and wagon. I thought he had made a bad bargain, for I was sure he would not be able to use the car under the new regime. He showed his own forebodings by hiding it.

For supper, a steaming plate of boiled potatoes with bits of brown bacon sprinkled over them was set before me, and a crock of cool sour milk, straight from the cellar. For the first time in many days I was filled and contented. I walked into the barnyard. Three Polish soldiers were sitting on the fence. They had been guests on this farm for two days. One was wounded in the arm and another had swollen feet.

"We are all that's left of our detachment," said one of them. "We were stationed near Ostrog a few miles from the border. On the morning of the seventeenth, when the Red Army invaded Poland, we thought they were coming to help us fight the Germans. When we saw their first troops, we ran out to meet them. We shouted, 'Brothers! Together we shall lick these Germans.'"

The wounded man spat with contempt. "Brothers, hell!

They let us have it, and some of us fell. We beat a hasty retreat to a small wood, where we held them off for some hours. But they brought up machine guns. We are the only ones who escaped."

"What are you going to do now?" I asked.

"Home, I guess," he answered, looking towards the west.

The farmer led me to the best bed in the house. I preferred the clean hay in the barn, but he was so insistent that I gave in and crawled into the featherbed. The bed was infested with bedbugs, and I spent a miserable night.

During the two days I stayed on the farm, the rumble of the Red Army rolling westward never ceased. On the third day, I thanked the farmer for his hospitality and set out for Rowne, five miles away, where the Soviet Army had its headquarters for the district. I expected to find more normal conditions in territory already occupied by the Russians—possibly a clean hotel room, fresh linen, and a hot bath.

On the main highway between Luck and Rowne I overtook some men who were arguing. Young Ukrainians had stopped four Polish refugees on bicycles and demanded that they turn the bicycles over to them. Just then three new cyclists approached from the east. The Ukrainians ran to grab the handle bars of the first two, but the third cyclist turned in a flash and sped away. Two Ukrainians jumped on the newly stolen bicycles and started in pursuit, but the Pole had a thirty-yard start. The distance between the Pole and his pursuers gradually increased, and the Ukrainians returned. Then I saw that one of the Ukrainians had grabbed the cap of a refugee and was trying to pull his coat off. The Poles were greatly outnumbered. No one had noticed me, and I hastened away.

When I was a safe distance from them, I slackened my pace. Then I noticed objects lying in the bushes by the roadside. I parted the branches. The objects were bruised and battered corpses, stripped of all clothing. The sun-drenched highway and the smiling countryside suddenly changed into a thing of horror. I looked at my shoes, at my suit. To continue alone

through this country meant death. With fearful glances in all directions, I hastened on toward Rowne.

I overtook a man trudging eastward. He was wearing the uniform of a Polish railroad man. He returned my greeting warmly.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"To Rowne, to find shelter and some food," I replied.

"Don't you know the Soviet Army is there in force?"

"I am an American, and I am sure they will not bother me."

He was dubious. "Why don't you come with me? I want to take the shortest route to Rzeszow. My home is there."

Thinking of the many miles I had tramped eastward, I could not be tempted. Rowne, my anticipated haven of rest and security, was too near. But I had taken a liking to this man, who embodied all that I considered familiar and safe, and I watched him with regret as he headed south across the fields.

At noon I came to a ridge, and caught my first glimpse of the white houses and bulbous domes of Rowne. I was so happy that I almost broke into a run. But the road was jammed with pedestrians and vehicles, and I had to push my way through. Red infantrymen glanced at me but said nothing. Their khaki uniforms did not impress me by their cut or quality. Their peaked felt helmets with ear flaps that could be buttoned under the chin looked strange at this time of year. "These troops are ready for cold weather," I thought.

Farther down the road some Russian soldiers were sitting on the grass talking and laughing. One of them jumped up and shouted, "*Oruzhye!*"

I had no idea what he meant and continued down the highway. Many troops were encamped on both sides. Then I came across Polish policemen, in their familiar blue uniforms, sitting on a hillside.

Poland was proud of her federal police, who were modeled after the British bobby. When the Polish Army retreated, the Polish police force had been ordered to concentrate in the east, where it was to be incorporated into the armed forces. But now the force had been captured by the Soviet Army. Its

men were separated from the civilian refugees and held under a strict guard.

A cordon of Russian soldiers extending across the road stopped me. Two husky men came up and began to search me, frisking every pocket and the sides of my trousers. One of them kept repeating "*Oruzhye!*"

It dawned on me now: they were looking for weapons. I said emphatically, "No *oruzhye!*" ("No weapons.")

Satisfied that I was unarmed, they allowed me to pass. I pulled out my passport and said, with what I thought was a French accent, "Commandant!" and then, in Polish, "I want to see the Commander. I am an American."

One of them led me off around a bend in the road. I saw a huge field filled with captives. They were civilian refugees. A feeling of oneness with them possessed me. With such I had fled eastward during the past weeks, and to them I was bound with ties of common suffering.

My guard pushed through them and steered me towards some Russian officers who were examining captives. The Commander looked at me with expressionless eyes. I presented my passport and said, "I am an American."

He grabbed my passport, thumbed through it, then turned to a younger officer, his adjutant, whose face seemed to remind me of someone. I realized later that the person he reminded me of was no other than myself. As a matter of fact, the resemblance was striking. The Commander spoke politely to me, but I did not understand. The adjutant, after a nod in my direction, walked away. At once two soldiers seized me by the arms and led me after him.

We crossed the highway and entered the back yard of a large farmhouse. There about thirty Polish officers, in tired and dejected poses, were sitting around. I was taken into a room where maps, pencils, and papers littered the table. It was the adjutant's office. My guards dropped my arms and posted themselves by the door. The adjutant examined my passport. I wondered if he knew English and could read it. Then he got up and walked out of the room with my passport

in his hand. After a long wait I grew uneasy. But when I tried to go through the door in search of him, the two sentries barred the exit with their bayonets. After a while, a noncommissioned officer, a veritable giant, came in and spoke to my sentries. They immediately disappeared. The giant snapped out a command to me, turned on his heels, and walked away.

What had he said? Was I to leave? Was I free? Was I to wait for my passport? I walked into the yard but saw no Russians about. I sauntered over to the Polish officers. They were crushed by the national tragedy and did not talk. They didn't even glance at me, though I sat with them for hours. One of them finally asked apathetically, "Where are you from?"

When I told him he said with a wry smile, "You are in a nice crowd now. What would your family in America think if they saw you in the hands of this army?"

Three burly Russians came into the yard and beckoned me out to the highway. Once again they went over me looking for weapons. This time, to the question "*Oruzhye?*" I immediately replied, "I have no *oruzhye*."

The other searches had been perfunctory in comparison with this one. Their fingers slid over every inch of my clothes and body, and not a pin escaped their notice. They finished, and one of them said, "You are free."

"But where is my passport? I cannot go without my passport."

They left me standing on the highway. I thought, "My passport! Some mess I'm in! How can I prove who I am the next time I am arrested? They'll shoot me at once! Where is that adjutant?"

I pondered the possibility of leaving the Soviet camp and tramping westward. But I remembered the corpses by the roadside, and decided I must have my passport.

I tried to re-enter the yard of the headquarters, but a sentry barred my entrance. I walked up and down the road for a long time, peering at every Russian who passed me in the hope of coming across the Commander or his adjutant. Finally I went

into the field where I had first seen the Commander and his staff to look for them among the masses of refugees.

A sharp wind arose from the northwest. I shivered and turned up the collar of my summer suit. How I wished for my topcoat, which had gone to Rumania in the Chrysler. I felt intensely hungry. Since breakfast I had had nothing to eat except some green apples. I took another green apple, my last, out of my pocket. I chewed slowly and sucked the juice, but was careful to spit out the pulp, in order to avoid dysentery.

Late in the afternoon a movement at the edge of the field attracted my attention. A thread of refugees, led by a few Russian soldiers, detached itself from the mass and began to move southward. The line grew longer and longer, until half of the multitude around me was winding its way—moving like a huge snake—across the fields. The scene evoked in my imagination long lines of prisoners being driven towards Siberia by czarist Cossacks on horseback cracking their whips. A fear swept over me and a desire to flee. I planned an escape by the highway, but found a long line of sentries posted there. Near by were the Polish officers whom I had talked with in the headquarters yard. I joined them.

Three Soviet trucks, headed towards Rowne, stopped opposite our group. "This will be a good chance for me to catch a ride," I said to myself. I walked up to a Russian officer and asked, "May I get in one of those trucks and ride to the city?"

Evidently he understood me, for he asked, "What were you in civilian life?"

"A pastor." He shook his head.

"A preacher," I explained. "A minister. A priest." But he did not understand.

A Polish captain spoke up in Russian, explaining, "He was a *pop*." It is the Russian word for parish priest.

The face of the Russian brightened. With a mocking light in his eyes he said, "*Harasho!* Get in the truck if you wish."

I thanked him and ran over to a group of Poles who were climbing into the first truck. We hoisted one another up. On

boards which were placed crosswise, we sat with our backs to the front, tightly wedged in.

Most of the group were Polish Army officers. There were also two captains, a lieutenant, and three sailors of the Polish Navy who had been serving with a small naval force operating on the waters of the Pinsk Marshes. Two of the officers were accompanied by their wives, the only women I saw that day among the captives. I sat on the board nearest the tail gate, between a naval captain and a sailor. Two Russian soldiers jumped up and occupied the end corners of each truck. They balanced their loaded rifles across their knees. I thought to myself, "If our destination is the city, why the guards?"

We moved. We passed the shabby, one-story houses on the outskirts of Rowne and entered the city. The streets were teeming with refugees, mostly women and children. Near the center of the city the crowds increased.

A three-story building ahead looked to me like a hotel, and I called to the driver to stop. But when I got up and started towards the end of the truck, a guard pushed me back.

"I want to go to the hotel," I explained.

In answer he patted his rifle significantly.

Our trucks rolled through the city. A feeling of helplessness swept over me. We jolted onward. My companions asked, "Where are they taking us?"

By the setting sun we knew we were headed east. That was all. An hour later we came to Korzec, a small town on the Polish-Russian border. The name was clearly painted on the road sign. We drove through without stopping. At a fork in the road, a signpost indicated the border. Despair seized us. Behind us lay all that was familiar; before us, the unknown. Now we knew where we were going: into Russia.

September 1939

by HANIA

GERMAN engineers, with the help of conscripted peasants, had been busy repairing the bridges in the vicinity of Bory. About one week after Germany's invasion of Poland, we saw on the road a continuous stream of trucks, cars, and tanks. A chain of military vehicles was streaming northward from the Czechoslovakian border. Like a mythical dragon, with a million eyes and a million rings to its iron body, it crept on and on. Mother, Father, and I watched from behind drawn curtains.

For six days the chain of vehicles moved through our village, poisoning the air with fumes of synthetic gasoline.

One day Lola, who had made her way across the river by wading the cold stream, came to our house. Then she and I walked to the village to buy some bread, if there was any. German soldiers riding in trucks hurled insults and pebbles at us. One of them threw a half-eaten apple at me, and it struck me on the head. I pretended not to have heard the filthy words that accompanied it. The square was filled with Germans, tanks, and cars. All the stores were closed, and we turned back empty-handed.

The days were filled with terror, the nights with despair. Was Gaither still alive? Had Joe been able to join him? How long would it take our armies to drive the invaders back across the borders? Mother, with her instinct for sanity, kept us working. Again and again I cleaned the house. I scrubbed off the paper strips which we had pasted over our windowpanes to preserve them from the concussion of bombs. Mother picked tomatoes and canned them. Sophia was unable to do much work.

Over the radio we followed the bombings of Warsaw. Announcers frequently gave the addresses of buildings and houses destroyed. One morning, about six o'clock—I was still in bed—I heard Father turn on the radio. The announcer was making known what houses had been destroyed during the night.

Suddenly my heart stopped. He had said Mokotowska 12. Our home in Warsaw! I fainted. When I regained consciousness Mother was standing over me saying it was time to get up. Weeks later I found out it had been a mistake. It was the house two doors away from ours.

One warm morning I dragged a tub and a washboard into the yard and washed out some clothes for Mimi and myself. The unexpected crunching of hobnailed boots made me raise my eyes from my work. A German officer and six soldiers were leading Grünberg towards me. I was amazed to see him, for he had fled with other Jews in August. The officer asked me who I was. When I gave my name, he said, "Good. It is you I want to speak to."

He led the way into the house, after having ordered five of the soldiers to remain outside with Grünberg. The sixth soldier stood in the doorway leaning on his rifle. My legs shook with fright, and I slumped into a chair. The officer seated himself and addressed me harshly. "You are hiding this Jew's radio, and I have come to get it."

"You are mistaken. By the way, I am an American citizen, and you have no right to question me."

The officer answered slowly, accenting each word. "I know that you are an American citizen, but you are hiding this Jew's radio. According to our law—and our law is the only law—this is a criminal offense. We have a witness, so don't try to lie. What I want to know is under what circumstances this Jew brought his radio to you."

A thought flashed through my mind: Wieckowa, the charwoman, must have seen Szmul bring it up. But what had Grünberg said? What should I say?

The officer continued, "This Jew will have to die. He lied to a German."

I interposed timidly, "What did he say?"

"He said he did not know where his radio was."

This gave me courage. "He isn't lying, and the radio isn't his any more. Grünberg had already left Bory when his brother-in-law brought the radio to me and asked me to hide

it. I told him I would not do it. I proposed, however, to buy it, and he agreed." I hoped the brother-in-law could not be located.

"So you bought it?" exclaimed the officer with a sneer.

"Yes, I did," I maintained stoutly, knowing that on my powers of persuasion rested the life of Grünberg.

"And how much did you pay him?"

"One hundred zlotys."

"Indeed! And what bills did you give him?"

Frantically I extemporized: "One fifty, one twenty, two fives, and the rest in change."

"Where is your receipt?"

"I didn't take a receipt."

"Huh! Is that the way you Poles do business?"

"I am not a businesswoman. I did not know I should take a receipt."

"And why did his brother-in-law sell a radio that did not belong to him?"

"He needed the money, and he knew that he could pay his debt when the war is over."

The officer was not convinced. He fired questions and roared threats. I answered as best I could, trying not to contradict myself and praying inwardly. I knew that if I failed to convince the German, they would shoot Grünberg, probably in our yard. The questioning continued. I felt my mind growing numb, my thoughts confused. Realizing that in utter weariness I would soon get hopelessly entangled, I took refuge in tears, and cried out, "You won't believe anything I say. You are only looking for an excuse to kill a man and steal my radio. You have taken our country, you have taken our freedom. Go ahead and take the rest—you barbarian!"

The German was taken aback. When I fumbled for a handkerchief, he produced his own, which I took in my confusion. He swallowed hard and said, "Please, madam, I believe your statement, and to prove that we are civilized people I will let the Jew go. He is lucky that I choose to believe you."

He ought to thank you for saving his life, for we would have shot him."

He stepped out on the veranda and barked a few orders at his men, who, with a shout and a kick, released Grünberg. The officer returned and introduced himself to Father, who had just entered. His name was Rudolph Gottlieb. Having dropped his ferocious manner, he apologetically explained that he would be forced to requisition the radio, since he had received orders. He drew out a fountain pen and wrote out a receipt, assuring me that in the near future I would be able to get my property back.

But this did not conclude our unpleasant interview. He settled comfortably in a chair and launched on an impassioned lecture, in which the echoes of Adolf Hitler could plainly be heard, on the vileness of the Jewish race and their nefarious influence in current affairs. He ended by saying, "Our Fuehrer has promised us to wipe out this vermin, and prosperity and peace will then reign forever in the world."

"Have you never met Jews that were kind and honest? Do you really believe that all of them are evil?" I asked.

This called forth another tirade. He ranted about Judas and the Rothschild family; and about the Freemasons, who, according to him, were only blind instruments of international Jewry. Finally he departed, leaving us exhausted and oppressed. It was the first time we had come face to face with Nazi fanaticism.

Some time later Grünberg's wife came to thank me for saving her husband's life and to borrow a box of soapflakes. I had only one box left, and we would not be able to buy any more during the war, but she promised to return the exact amount of soap borrowed, saying she had a large supply hidden away. I let her have some. Several weeks later I reminded her of her promise. At first she denied borrowing anything. When I insisted, she reluctantly returned part of the amount.

For days the fear of being questioned again in the Grünberg case haunted me. So one afternoon I nearly collapsed when I saw three soldiers coming up the hill. I ran into the living room to warn the family, but before I could say a word the soldiers

had opened the door and were standing in the room. One of them said, "We have been told that a pastor lives here."

Thinking they had come to arrest Father, I spoke up quickly to keep him from identifying himself as the pastor. I tried to confuse them by saying, "Yes, you must have heard about my husband. He is a pastor."

"Where is he? We would like to speak to him."

"He is away, and I don't even know if he is still alive," I replied, glad for the first time of Gaither's absence.

One of them said with a smile, "We are from Württemberg and arrived only a few days ago. We are members of the Evangelical Brotherhood of the Lutheran Church, and we miss our church services. We had hoped that this home would be a place where we could worship."

We realized that these men had not come as enemies, and we invited them to sit down. They introduced themselves—George Wackler, Leonard Seger, and Joseph Schmidt. All three were farmers. They seemed ill at ease in uniforms and in their new role of invaders. They told us about their wives, children, cattle, and orchards they had left behind. They produced pictures and letters from home and listened with tears in their eyes when we told about Gaither and Joe. Father disclosed that he was a retired minister.

They asked us then to join them in prayer. They, the enemy, the masters, and we, the conquered slaves, knelt together, each praying for those we loved and whom we had little hope of ever seeing again. They arranged to return twice a week, on Sundays and Wednesdays, for an hour of worship.

After their departure Mother and I asked Father if he believed it would be wise to have these Germans come regularly to the house. Wouldn't people think we were traitors? We might be called to account for this when our army came back. "It might be dangerous," he said. "People may turn away from us. They may hang us for treason. But this I know: for such reasons I cannot close my door on men who come in the name of God."

The three German soldiers called regularly. Often they came

while we were preparing a meal. They would walk into the kitchen and peer into pots and pans. They noticed our dwindling rations. One day Seger came alone, bringing a little parcel. He deposited it on the kitchen table: six lumps of sugar, a piece of bread, and a small slice of boiled beef. He fetched a plate from the cupboard and arranged his gifts on it.

"Sugar for the little girl," he said patting Mimi on the head. "A child must have something sweet." Then he added, beaming with pride, "*Und Rindfleisch und Brot.*" ("And beef and bread.")

Mother came up from the cellar one day with a grave look on her face. "Hania," she said, "our potatoes are almost gone. In another three or four days we won't have a thing to eat."

We took stock of our situation. In the garden only a few tomatoes were left. Stores were closed, so our only chance was to buy from local peasants. I went from farm to farm, imploring them to sell us any food they could spare. But everywhere I met the same answer. "The crops were not good this year," they would say, or, "Most of our potatoes are still in the ground."

The farmers were right. Situated in a mountain section, Bory lived on what the local population made on summer guests. Flour, potatoes, vegetables, and butter were imported from the richer parts of Poland. Now cut off from the outer world, the people of our mountain region faced starvation.

One day we served our last potatoes. That afternoon Wackler came into the kitchen, dragging something heavy.

"Look what I have brought you." He spoke triumphantly. It was a hundred-pound sack of potatoes! We confessed how we had searched in vain. He took out a pencil and figured the number of sacks we would need for the winter. Together we calculated that twelve cubic meters would keep the five of us and Abdulla, our St. Bernard, fed until next July. He promised to get us the required potatoes and some sugar and flour from Czechoslovakia, where food was still plentiful.

A little later Wackler called again, his placid face dark with worry. He made sure that no strangers were present.

Then he whispered, "I have come to warn you. The army has turned the administration over to the civilian authorities, and the Gestapo are coming tomorrow. You will have to watch your step. Remember, don't talk politics with anyone. When I say anyone, I mean to include people you have known for years—Poles or Jews. The Gestapo have their agents everywhere, and you can never tell who they are. If you have any arms in the house, throw them in the river or bury them in the woods, or give them to me. Remember, the Gestapo do not joke."

After he had left we decided that he had exaggerated. One by one we reviewed the inhabitants of our village: except for Wieckowa, none could arouse suspicion.

The rule of the Gestapo started. One morning Father met a neighbor—a farmer by the name of Gardon—in the village. His two sons had been serving in the Polish Army. Gardon told Father that the boys had escaped capture on the German front and had made their way home in civilian clothes. The next day the Gestapo had appeared at their farm, pushed him and his wife into the stable, and had taken the two young men into the house. An hour later they rode off on their motorcycles. The parents rushed into the house. They found the boys on the floor unconscious and bloody. The whitewashed walls and the floor had been splashed with blood. This morning the Gestapo had returned for their victims. But the boys were gone. The parents hoped that their sons had crossed the border into Slovakia and that they were on their way to France. Every Polish man of military age tried to reach France, expecting to fight the Germans there.

The officer who had taken Grünberg's radio walked in one day and sat down, enjoying my alarm and embarrassment.

"You remember me, Mrs. Warfield? Rudolph Gottlieb. Today I've come to ask a favor. I know you have a typewriter. May I borrow it?"

I had no intention of lending anything to the Germans, but

I feared to refuse, and so I said, "I do a lot of writing. I need it all the time. Still, if you insist—"

"*Ach, bitte!*" interrupted the German. "This is not an order but a request. If you can't spare it, maybe you know of someone in the village who has a typewriter?"

If someone had to give up his machine, it might as well be I. "All right, take my typewriter. But please take good care of it and do return it. It belongs to my husband. He is an American, and I am sure American property can't be confiscated."

"Thank you and don't worry," said Gottlieb. "But let me give you this advice: Don't tell everyone you are a Pole. You have an American passport, and no one need know of your national origin."

I felt my face redden. "Really," I said, "I see no reason to be ashamed. I am proud of being a Pole."

"Oh, come. Proud! Why should you be proud? Poland is a small country, and after twenty-one years of independence she's lost her freedom again. Soon even her name will be forgotten."

"It was not forgotten during her partitions. In more than a hundred years the world was never allowed to forget Poland. The greatness of a nation is determined not by its size but by its people. It is the will of the people of Poland to resist the invader and to survive."

At this point Mother, alarmed by our rising voices, came in. After one glance at our faces she sent me out of the room under a pretext and remained to calm the German. When I came back he was far from pacified.

"If it hadn't been for Poland's obstinacy, we'd be in Moscow today!" he was shouting. "Instead of joining us against the Russians, Poland has forced this war on us, on the world! The Poles are an inferior race, but we could have used them. Now nothing remains but to wipe them out!"

Mother, who so seldom cried, was in tears. This sight was like a match set to a fuse. The anxiety, the fear, the despair of the last weeks, which I had controlled only by a great effort,

now broke all dams and became savage hatred. I had never experienced anything like it before.

"You cad!" I shouted. "Take what you want and go! Don't ever show yourself here again, for I shall spit in your face."

Gottlieb stepped back and made a gesture with his hand.

"Yes, grab your gun!" I cried. "Go ahead and shoot! I'd rather be dead than stay for another moment in the same room with a German."

Gottlieb pressed his palms to his perspiring forehead.

"Madam, calm yourself," he exclaimed. "I didn't mean to insult you or your mother. Forgive me." He reached for my hand but I recoiled in horror. He turned to Mother, who kept repeating "*Moj Boze, moj Boze!*" ("My God, my God!"). He grasped her hand and pressed it to his lips. "*Gnädige Frau,*" he implored, "ask your daughter to forgive me. Tell her I am sorry. Tell her I'm an Austrian, half Italian, quick-tempered—"

"Please forgive him," Mother said to me. "He is not a real German. Please, dear, be a Christian."

To my mortification I burst into wild sobs. By this time Mother was weeping again, and tears were streaming down Gottlieb's face too. Mother caught one of my hands, the German dropped to his knees and kissed my other hand frantically. I sat down, and Gottlieb walked to the window and mopped his face. He was the first to speak.

"I hope you will forgive me," he said. "I shall prove to you that I am not an enemy of the Poles. If I can help you in any way, let me know." He started for the door without mentioning my typewriter, but ashamed of my outburst I urged him to take it. He refused; I insisted. But he finally left without the typewriter.

The occupational forces stationed in our village consisted of older men from the Rhineland, most of them farmers and fathers of large families. Neither their bearing nor their attitude showed the least military spirit. They were anxious to make friends and showed a great interest in the life of the

community. They missed their families and their work, and dreamed only of peace, which they were sure would come no later than February or March. Though they felt that this war was an unnecessary thing, they had full confidence in the Fuehrer's promise of victory and world domination.

For years we had read in our press about the dire poverty of the German people. We had been told that they lacked everything, beginning with food and clothing. Until the war we had thought that Hitler's clamorings for new territories and colonies had been motivated by a real necessity. Talking to these simple German soldiers, who, we felt, were giving us facts and not propaganda, we realized Germany's tremendous wealth. The general level of prosperity was not comparable with that of any other country in Europe. Only America seemed in the same category. It was a shock to find that our sincere pity had been wasted. The German soldiers, aware of their country's wealth, frequently remarked, "What did the Fuehrer want to take these small countries for? They have nothing we want."

We, like the Germans, waited expectantly for spring. We, the people of Poland, were sure that England and France, secure behind the Maginot Line and the Channel, had prepared and armed to the utmost. The spring would bring an offensive and a smashing victory. Once in a while, watching German military columns roll by, we had misgivings, but we never failed to silence them by arguments about the might of our allies. We did not believe Officer Gottlieb when he maintained that neither France nor England would exert themselves in behalf of a little country like Poland. In imitation of his Fuehrer, he jeered at the democracies, calling them antiquated and decayed.

One day Father came back from the village bringing great news. The Allies had landed at Gdynia! We produced maps and peered over them intently, searching for possible landing points and determining probable troop movements and tactics. By and by, as nothing came to confirm this information, we realized that it was one of those rumors which were springing

up day after day. Some of the rumors were fostered by the Germans themselves, as a means of undermining Polish morale. Others grew out of feverish imaginations, wishful thinking, the impossibility of believing that everything was over for us. Having no newspapers, no radios (all had been confiscated), no sources of information except the official communiqués of the invaders, it was impossible for us to know the truth.

People who had fled in the first days of the war began to drift back, bringing with them tales of suffering and destruction. We heard for the first time in detail of the ruthless bombings of civilian refugees on highways, of villages completely destroyed by fire and bombs, of children and cattle shot in the fields by German airmen.

One day while I was cooking our noon meal—we had released Sophia, not being able to feed an extra mouth or pay her wages—there was a knock on our kitchen door. A thin, haggard man greeted me in the peasant fashion with “Praise be Jesus Christ.” By his accent I knew he was a mountaineer from around Zakopane. “I am hungry and cold,” he said. “Will you let me come in?”

I knew he was a soldier, despite the civilian rags that he wore. I seated him at the kitchen table and said the soup would be ready in a little while. He edged closer to the hot kitchen stove. At first he answered my questions hesitantly, then the words came stumbling out like a torrent. Yes, he was a soldier, he had been in the battle, or rather the massacre, of Kutno. Then he had retreated, with a few survivors, to Warsaw. They were encircled by an ever tightening ring of iron and fire. He had stuck it out to the last—hungry, without water, without ammunition.

“My last cartridges,” he cried, shaking his fist at the invisible enemy, “were blanks. They were blanks, do you hear me?”

Like so many others trying to avoid capture, he had thrown off his uniform when everything was over. Someone had given him rags, and in these he had made his way through a torn-up country back to the mountains. I went to my room and came back with two of Gaither’s shirts, some underwear and socks,

a sweater, and an old pair of trousers. I wasn't sure that I was right in giving these things away. Gaither might be back any day and, if what the man said about the destruction of Warsaw was true, would need any clothes that he had left in the country.

The weather grew increasingly cold, and clothes became an acute problem. I unraveled an old shawl of Mother's and knitted Mimi a sweater, a pair of gloves, and a warm cap. There was enough wool left over to knit myself a pair of gloves. I made the gauntlets about a foot long, to cover my arms up to the short sleeves of my summer dresses. Money and food were a problem too. Our funds were almost exhausted by the end of October, and there was no prospect of getting to Warsaw. I tried to sell my rings and the other bit of jewelry I had with me. The peasants were not interested. They had neither the money nor the desire to purchase such useless objects. The few Jews who remained in the village, better informed by their grapevine system of the looting in other places, did not want to buy objects which could easily fall prey to the Germans. We could have traded some bed linen and clothes for food, but at the rate of exchange the peasants proposed, our possessions wouldn't have lasted a month.

One day a peasant came to the house carrying a handbag in which he had four or five pounds of potatoes. He said, "I hear that you want to buy potatoes, so I have brought you some."

"How much do you want?" I asked.

He took off his cap, scratched his head, put his cap on again, and finally said, "A pair of men's shoes."

"My good man, a pair of men's shoes for this little bag of potatoes?"

He looked aggrieved. "Why, I thought you needed potatoes."

Days dragged on, full of unfamiliar tasks, worries, and bewilderment, but nights were the hardest. Then fears and sorrows raised their heads and made sleep impossible. Night

after night, whenever I closed my eyes, the same vision would come back: Gaither lying on the ground with his face pressed into the mud, a pool of blood oozing from under his motionless body, with one stiff hand extended towards me, as if begging for help. The vision never changed.

One morning Mimi was playing with her blocks, and Lola and I were mending stockings and discussing fuel for the winter, the chances of selling jewelry in New Market, seeds and manure for the garden. Suddenly Adbulla, who had been dozing, dashed out into the garden barking furiously. We hurried out on the porch and saw a man advancing. Lola ran towards him and threw her arms around his neck. I recognized Ir, her husband. He had got back from Warsaw. Where was Gaither then? Was he dead? If Ir had come back, he could have come back also. But Ir knew nothing about Gaither.

One of the village women dropped in to tell us of refugees who in the last days had returned to Bory. Then she said to Father and Mother, "Dulakowa told me that a soldier has returned who said he had seen your son."

Joe had been seen! Where? When? The woman was vague when we pressed her for particulars. She wasn't sure who the soldier was. Perhaps one of the Grucelas. Father and I went off in search of the soldier who had seen Joe.

The community was full of people by the name of Grucela, and it would not be easy to find the right man. Through mud and snow, buffeted by a sharp wind, we went from house to house, from valley to valley, from hill to hill. It was dark when we got home. We had not found the soldier.

When the last of our money was gone, having no other way out, I went to the local German headquarters and asked the old Hauptmann for a job. He received me in a not unkindly manner. "I'm sorry, but we can't give you an office job. You know, an alien and all that. What other kind of work could you do?"

"I can type a bit. I speak French, German, English, and

Polish. I play the violin and the piano. I can draw and paint a bit."

He interrupted me gruffly. "Huh! Impractical Polish drawing-room education! I am sorry, but we have nothing for you."

There was but one thing left to do, yet pride held me back. But the thought of Mimi, Father, and Mother without food forced me to act.

I went out on the highway where I knew the German soldiers would pass. I was glad of the dusk which concealed my burning face. Several soldiers went by, but I stood as if rooted. When an elderly, stooped soldier approached, I stumbled forward and asked, "*Können Sie mir ein Stück Brot geben?*" ("Could you give me a piece of bread?")

He peered into my face and said, "I have no bread with me, but where do you live?"

I motioned towards our house.

"I will bring you some."

When he had gone I sat down in the ditch and, with my head on my knees, cried for a long time. That same evening there was a sharp tap on the kitchen window. I stepped out on the porch. A German soldier was standing there.

"There it is," he said, pointing to a package by the door, and disappeared. The parcel contained a large loaf of military bread.

October and November 1939

by GAITHER

FOR years I had planned to visit Russia. Several times I had applied in vain to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for permission to enter the country. Now I was being taken on a sightseeing trip such as no tourist could dream of.

Our truck rolled eastward from the Polish border. There was no sign of human habitation. The rough highway ran through

a long stretch of once cultivated fields now gone to waste. Here and there a small stream or clump of trees broke the monotony of the plain. We came to land that was tilled, but no villages or farmhouses appeared. It was night when we passed the first dwelling—a low sprawling structure with a kerosene lamp burning at one window. I heard the sounds of many people moving by on the highway, but in the dark I could not see them.

It grew cold, and a sharp wind came up. I had on summer underwear, a thin cotton sweater bought in Luck, and a summer suit. In these clothes I faced a Russian winter. My teeth chattered. The Polish naval captain next to me put part of the cloak he was wearing over my shoulders.

It must have been ten in the evening when we came to the first Russian town. We blinked in the glare of bright street lights. But there was nothing of interest to see: houses looked dilapidated, and the cobblestone streets were almost deserted. We rolled on into the black night.

Everything ceased to matter during the hours we moved on. I, a product of a civilization built upon respect for man, was a nameless object, robbed of human rights, stripped of dignity.

It was still dark when we climbed off the trucks. Steaming locomotives clanked by. We passed long lines of waiting freight cars as we were led across many tracks. Columns of prisoners, guided by the swinging lanterns of their guards, shuffled along in a silence broken only by an occasional command. We were told to join one of the columns. It was tiring to walk over the railroad ties, for they made measured, regular steps impossible. At a command ahead, we stopped beside a long freight train. More orders followed, and we climbed into the blackness of an empty cattle car. We helped one another, then the door was slammed to and fastened from without. We listened to the metal scraping into place.

Someone produced a flashlight, and we examined our surroundings. We were standing in the middle of the car, massed together in the small space. Each of the two ends had three tiers of shelves made of heavy planks. The tiers were six feet

deep, and the distance between them was about two feet. We climbed on the shelves and lay down. Few slept, in spite of exhaustion. Lying in the fetid darkness, with my face pressed against the wall of the car and the dank odor of the boards above in my nostrils, I had the suffocating feeling of being buried alive. In a wild desire to escape I tried to sit up. I cracked my head against the upper board.

I lay on my back listening to the clanking of wheels and the groans of my companions. Each time the train jerked, a shower of dirt came down. I tried to avoid it by turning my head from side to side and by getting over on my stomach. The dirt fell into my ears and down my neck.

When the morning light began to filter through the cracks, I crawled out sore and stiff and joined a huddle in the center. I had become separated from the group that I had been with in the truck, and these new companions were strangers. There were thirty-seven of us in the car—some civilians and some military men. All were Poles except me. It annoyed me at first that no one seemed surprised to find me, an American citizen, in this plight. I still had the attitude, common to most Americans, that calamities which befall others could not touch me.

There was no toilet, not even a pail, in the car. The men relieved themselves at the door, hoping the cracks would serve as a sewer. The stench seemed unbearable until I grew accustomed to it.

The day wore on, but no food was handed out. The train was not always moving. At times it stood waiting for hours. During one of these stops we heard a noise in the car ahead of us. The men were kicking on the door with their heels. A man in our car looked through a little window near the roof, and said that the Soviet guards were releasing some of the prisoners. We too began to pound on the door, demanding to be let out. But it was some time before our turn came. As soon as the door slid open, we jumped out with wild whoops.

Our train stretched as far as we could see. The doors were open, and men were climbing out. Hundreds were already squatting beside the cars. The ground alongside the tracks

had become a vast latrine. Russians stood every twenty yards, watching with their rifles held in readiness. Whenever someone got too close to them, they cried, "*Davay na zad!*" ("Get back!") These words I was to hear often during the following weeks. By and by we were ordered to get back on the train. It was not easy. Weakened by days of hunger and sleepless nights, we could hardly hoist ourselves up, even with help. When all were in, doors were slammed to and bolts shot into place. In the afternoon our train stopped again, and through half-open doors huge round loaves of black rye bread were shoved in. Those nearest the door pounced on them and began to cut them up. The portions were not even, but there was little argument. Exhaustion had dulled our tempers. Later we obtained a pail of cold water.

The second day we passed through Kiev. I looked through a crack, which did not enable me to see much of the city. But I did see the Dnieper River, which we crossed on a very long, high bridge.

One of the men had picked up a small piece of sheet iron when we were released the first day. It came in handy. As it grew cold, those who had pocket knives began to cut up the boards we slept on. Placing the sheet iron in the middle of the floor, they built a fire. The smoke filled the car, stinging our eyes, but the heat was wonderful, and the flickering flames cheered the gloomy interior.

On the third day of our journey, while our train was standing on a siding, we were released and allowed to walk to a near-by shack, where we obtained hot water. Two men in our group had some tea, and they shared it with all. I sipped my portion slowly, relishing every drop. On the way for the water, I met a tall, well-dressed Russian officer. I said to him, "I am an American and I demand that I be released."

He looked at me with interest. "Where are your documents?" he asked in broken Polish.

"Stolen!" I explained what had happened.

"There is nothing I can do. You have to wait until we get to our destination. We'll soon be there."

The same day we passed through Konotop and Bakhmach, two railroad centers. By this we knew that we were on the main line from Kiev to Moscow. The following morning we left our freight cars on the outskirts of a small town.

The day before we had been given an extra large ration of bread. As I was about to leave the car, I noticed three whole loaves lying on a tier. I picked them up in spite of the taunts of my companions. Five abreast, we set out in a long line. I became the butt of many jokes with my loaves in my arms.

"Hi, baker! Do you expect to have rolls soon?"

"Are you taking these as a souvenir?"

"Maybe you'll be glad to get some later on," I answered.

Our column stopped near a large factory. It was a sugar refinery. Here I had a good look at Russian workers. They were dressed in a style common to the working class in eastern Europe, but their clothes were shabby. Their round, stolid faces bore an expression of apathy and sadness. Their lack of spontaneity and joy struck me.

After a while we were packed into the small, open freight cars of a narrow-gauge railroad which ran by the factory. The small locomotive began to chug up a narrow valley, we left the village, and the country grew wild. Brush and poplar groves grew down to the track. We pulled out into a wilder valley, covered with huge fields of peat. We passed by a large number of low barracks covered with black tar paper and surrounded by high, barbed-wire fences. This was a camp, but it looked empty. Soon we came to a second camp, which was full of civilians. When they saw us, they came running to the fence, shouting and waving their arms. We were too far away to understand them. From their dress and bearing, however, we knew them to be Poles. Before they were out of sight, we saw Russian guards run out and chase them away from the fence. About a half mile farther on we came to a third camp, and here we stopped. At an order we climbed over the sides of our cars. Again we formed in long columns five abreast. Slowly we marched up a low hill, where Soviet soldiers opened the gates of our future home. Once inside, we halted.

Officers came out to look us over. After a perfunctory inspection, they stood talking. I noticed the tall, well-dressed officer whom I had told about my stolen passport during the trip. One of the officers called out in good Polish, "Where is the man who says he is an American citizen?"

"Here!" I cried eagerly, stepping forward.

"Come over here," he ordered.

I found myself face to face with the commander of our camp. He spoke in Russian, and another man interpreted.

"You cannot be released immediately, but the Commander says he will assign you to the best room in this camp."

One of the guards took me to the only barracks that was painted and into a small room. He told several prisoners who were lolling around that I was to live with them and left. So began my first day in the camp of Tchortkovo, near the village of Putivi.

My new companions flocked around me. This popularity flattered me until I realized that the loaves of bread I was still hugging were the attraction. They all begged for a piece, and in a twinkling I saw two of my loaves cut up and divided. Suddenly one of the men whispered, "Better hang on to your bread. The rations here are small and you will be needing it before long."

I looked into the kindly face of the man who had spoken and introduced myself, and he told me his name was Michael Sikora. He was a farmer and a volunteer in the Polish Army, and had left behind a wife and three little boys. He explained that most of the prisoners in our room were privates—farmer boys from a district east of Warsaw.

Towards evening I cut a slice from my last loaf of bread and ate it slowly. Then, following the example of my companions, I prepared for the night. Michael told me I was to sleep next to Jan, one of the older men. My bed was the bare floor, not too dirty considering the muddy boots which had walked over it all day long.

"There isn't much room," Jan said, "but you can squeeze in."

We slept in three rows with our legs drawn up, as the room

was too narrow for us to stretch out full length. Sometimes, forgetting this in my sleep, I would straighten my cramped muscles and kick the head or neck of the man below me. This aroused violent protest.

"Psia krew! ("Dog's blood!") Can't you sleep like a human being? Keep your feet to yourself."

By and by I learned to sleep curled up. I also learned to overcome other discomforts. The soldiers in the row next to me slept with their feet toward my head, under my nose. I often wondered if my deep sleep in this room was not the result of partial asphyxiation.

Following the example of others, I took off my shoes, socks, coat, and trousers before lying down. A block of wood I had found in a corner of the room served as a pillow. On this I put my shoes and trousers and lay down. My coat served as a blanket. That first evening, Jan, after one look at my drawers, and bare legs protruding, threw half of his army overcoat over me. Because of the cold we did not open the window. The air was warmed by the heat of our closely packed bodies, but it grew fetid. In the night I was awakened by a punch in the stomach. It was just a man going out. All night long there was this constant moving about. The thin soup diet and the cold resulted in many trips to the deep ditch which served as a latrine. To our captors, this ditch, with a log over it, seemed adequate. For me, the fear of falling in was more nerve-racking than bombs. Besides, in the darkness it was easy to stray too close to the barbed-wire fence and be shot by a sentry.

Returning to my barracks that first night, I was struck by a strange sound—the sound of flailing grain or of the rhythmic beat of many feet in a primitive dance. I found out what it was. The building in which the Polish officers were quartered was not so well built as my barracks. It had warped walls and floors with wide cracks. The officers found it impossible to sleep. With the cold air blowing in, they were so chilled that they had to get up and stamp their feet to keep from freezing. In the daytime, when the barracks grew

warmer, they slept lying anywhere, exhausted and dead to the world.

The next morning I woke up about seven. Others were already stirring in my room. I pulled on my clothes and asked where to wash. Jan led me to the pump at one end of the camp, where we filled two buckets. He poured a thin trickle of icy water into my cupped hands, and I doused my face and neck. Drying myself with my handkerchief, I felt refreshed and very clean. In turn I poured while Jan washed.

Later, when the snow lay a foot deep and the thermometer dropped below freezing, this washing required strength of character. Each morning we vowed we wouldn't wash again, but somehow the next day we did—except one individualist who never washed yet looked no dirtier than the rest of us.

This first morning I was assigned to tidying up the room for the day. It meant sweeping the floor with bundles of birch twigs and did not take long. After nine o'clock I stood by the only window in our room waiting for two of my companions to return with our breakfast. The large tin container they brought in and our six washbasins were placed on the floor. All watched the man who stirred the thin, dark, liquid, in which whole grains of barley and an occasional discolored potato swam around. A flood of advice, exhortations, and recriminations broke out when he began to ladle out the soup into the washbasins.

"Hey, man! How about some of the thick in our basin?"

"What's the matter with you, ours is only half full!"

"Stir it. Stir again before you dip."

Quarrels broke out. No one began to eat until the last drop had been divided. Then, armed with tin spoons, we fell to. Sitting on the floor with four others, I dipped my spoon into our basin. Having not yet mastered the technique of my companions, I had barely sampled the soup when they were scraping the bottom. Hunger, however, is an efficient teacher, and a few days later someone said of me with high respect, "He is the fastest pig in the room."

Around one o'clock that first day we had another portion

of the same soup. Soon after five I was hungry and ready for anything. But it was barley soup again! And barley soup remained our daily fare for the four weeks I spent in this part of the camp.

The first morning I walked out to look around. The enclosure covered approximately five acres. Around it was a high wall of barbed wire thickly crisscrossed. Five feet inside was a second fence of three single strands of barbed wire. I was warned not to go beyond this inner fence because the Soviet sentries fired at anyone doing so.

The sentries were tall, strong, raw-boned. They wore long, thick overcoats, high boots, warm mittens. The flaps of their pointed felt hats protected their ears and necks. Their comfortable clothing made me shiver all the more in my thin suit. I tried to speak to one of them, but he growled, and his dull eyes moved menacingly.

Possessed already by the psychology common to all captives, I walked the entire distance around the enclosure, following the inner fence and making mental note of the lay of things. There were nine sentries, and I tried to remember their posts. Of the nine large barracks within our enclosure, ours was the newest and the most comfortable. Some of the smaller, straw-thatched buildings were open, and I rummaged through them in search of anything which might prove useful to me. But they contained only broken-down wagons.

Our camp was lighted by electricity. The power plant was outside the fence. Also outside were two barracks where the guards lived and a large house for supplies.

Small groups of prisoners had made fires in the open. In huge kettles hung over the fires, these men were heating water to wash and boil their clothes.

Most of the men, despite the lack of soap, attended to their washing regularly. But I had only one suit of underwear and one shirt. Once a week I would bring some water to our room, and there I would do my laundry and hang it up, waiting naked for it to dry.

After my first tour I went back to the barracks. Most of

the men were indoors, sleeping, talking, or playing cards. Cards were the favorite pastime, as there were no other games, no magazines, no books. Several men had made primitive checkerboards and checkers. This gave me an idea: I decided to make myself a set of chess. Bread would have been easy enough to mold, but not having enough of it, I chose wood. It took me three days of intensive work to complete my set. When Hania's father had initiated me into the pleasures of the game, we had sat in a sunny room with flower pots on the window sill. How little we knew under what circumstances I would be playing it. One of the older men in my room knew the game, but I beat him every time, and this discouraged him and he would not play with me again. I taught Jan, and within a week we were getting a good deal of pleasure out of our engagements. But I began to feel the effects of hunger and hardships, and I found it increasingly hard to concentrate and to plan my moves, until at last the effort was too great.

Our bread allowance for one day was brought to us in the evening. It always gave rise to quarreling. On the floor lay four hard, round loaves, and twenty-eight hungry men encircled them determined to let no one get away with a slice larger than his own. One of the men stepped forward and took up one loaf. With a knife he scratched the dividing lines on the crust. The men drew closer and began shouting.

This scene recurred every day. The distribution and the eating of bread was the cause of more fights and bad feeling than anything else in our camp. Thefts of clothing, money, or other personal belongings never occurred in our room, but bread was something beyond our ethics. We never left the room without either taking our portion with us or asking one of our trusted friends to guard it where it lay, carefully marked, on a shelf, on the window sill, or in an overcoat pocket.

Monotony was broken only by an occasional N.K.V.D. (Soviet secret police) examination. The examinations were conducted in a most primitive manner and with an amazing inefficiency. Although only a few men at a time could be ques-

tioned, we were usually all called into the adjoining room and lined up. Sometimes we stood for three or four hours waiting our turn. Usually, as no one seemed to pay much attention to us, we got bored and wandered off without having been called. One day my turn came. I was ushered back into our room, where the officials gathered. One of them read out about twenty routine questions from a sheet of paper, while another wrote down the answers in a notebook. The one who was doing the writing sweated profusely as he slowly wrote out the words with a great deal of calligraphic difficulty. I was examined six different times during my stay in this camp. The questions were always the same: name, place of birth, home address, and names of father, mother, grandparents, brothers and sisters, and uncles and aunts. The emphasis on uncles and aunts always surprised me. Asked where I came from and not wishing to burden their minds by such an unknown name as Rockville, Maryland, I simply said, "Washington, D.C."

My examiner asked, "Washington. What is it?"

Another time, when I pleaded for permission to wire for a passport to Washington, I was asked, "Who is Washington?"

The questions seemed to have always one main aim in view. It was to ascertain whether I was a proletarian and whether my parents were proletarians. When I said that one of my grandfathers was a farmer, their curiosity was aroused, and they inquired how many acres he had. They were greatly confused when I stated that he had two hundred. I added that this, in America, was considered a small farm. The information so laboriously gathered by dozens of these officials throughout many weeks of examination did not seem to have any useful purpose. It seemed to be an endless shuffling and reshuffling of paper.

One morning I saw on my shirttail a moving red speck. Jan told me what it was. Then we examined each other and found the whole room infested with lice. Someone spoke to the camp authorities, and the next day two Polish officers came into our room. It was the first time I had heard of the presence of

Polish doctors among the prisoners. They told us we would have to be deloused.

Although I had been in the camp over two weeks I had not yet been to the bathhouse. Now we were taken to it in groups of forty men. Inside a room with benches running around the walls we undressed and tied our clothes into separate bundles, and these were taken at once to the delousing apparatus, which consisted of a large boiler. The clothes packed into the boiler were submitted to a high pressure of steam.

After we had given up our clothes we went into the next room. It was equipped with a cement floor, drains, and about twenty spigots, some with hot and others with cold water. We drew water into wooden buckets and washed ourselves. I still had a small sliver of soap from home, and those who had none eyed me with envy as I worked up a good lather. Like every typical Russian bathhouse, ours had its steam room—a small room with a tier of five steps, and, at one side, a number of large stones heated by a special stove. We threw cold water on these stones and stretched out on the steps in the billows of vapor that filled the air. A few of the stronger ones went up to the higher tiers, but the rest of us stayed on the second, unable to stand so much heat. This delightful interlude didn't last very long, and after a final dousing with warm and cold water we were made to wait naked in the cold dressing room until our bundles were brought from the delousing machine. My suit looked like a crumpled rag. The steam had set all the creases and wrinkles permanently.

For two days after this we were free of vermin, but on the third day the lice reappeared. As only a small number of prisoners could take a bath at one time, the camp was never thoroughly disinfected. After a while we took the lice for granted and would not let ourselves be troubled by them.

One morning I sat in the yard, basking in the November sunlight, when I heard someone asking, "Are you from Jeziorna?"

Jeziorna! For many years I had lived not far from this village near Warsaw. The voice seemed familiar. I saw two men

coming towards me, a private and a captain. The thin, short, fair-haired officer was my old neighbor and country doctor who had seen me through illnesses.

"What are you doing here, Dr. Pajak?" I cried.

Suddenly everything was changed. I felt less cold, less hungry. The barrenness of the prison enclosure was less hopeless as I talked with this old friend of familiar places and people. He knew Hania, Mimi, Camilla, Peter.

Dr. Pajak took me at once to his quarters, a tiny room in one of the barracks, shared with five other physicians. Their only luxury was beds—plain boards nailed to a wooden frame. He told me that there were twelve doctors among the prisoners in our enclosure. By now I knew that ours was one of five enclosures grouped around the ruins of a once famed Russian Orthodox monastery. The monastery was on the top of a hill some five miles away from our camp. There were from six to seven thousand war prisoners in the whole camp, we estimated, and among these, according to Pajak, more than a hundred medical men.

I learned from him that there was a Polish Army dentist in our section. Since my friend Michael had been suffering for several days with a toothache, I took him to the dentist. But what could be done without dental instruments or supplies?

The dentist pulled a nail out of a wall in his room and flattened it and bent it into shape. Two of us held Michael by the arms, pinning him firmly to a chair. The dentist hooked the nail around the tooth and tugged sharply. Michael writhed and howled as the tooth cracked and came out with a jerk. He was bleeding profusely, and his lip was cut by the jagged nail. But in no time he was smiling with relief to be rid of so much pain. Against all my expectations, the gums healed rapidly without any infection setting in.

It was the custom of my barracks to begin and end every day with a hymn. This hymn, really a prayer, dates back to the sixteenth century, and all Polish Christian churches, regardless of denomination, know it and use it in their worship.

One morning while we were singing, a Russian Kommissar walked into the room. His face was red as he shouted to us to stop, but we finished the hymn.

"What were you singing?" he asked.

"A Polish hymn."

"You mean a religious song?"

"Yes."

"You can't do that here. It's against regulations. Religion is a private matter. Any man, and of course every prisoner too, can beat his head upon the wall all he pleases. But you can't sing religious songs. That's propaganda for religion."

He singled me out for a personal reproach. "I'm surprised at you. I've been told that you are an educated man. Don't tell me that you too believe in God."

When I retorted that in my country education did not quarrel with the faith in a Supreme Being, the Kommissar embarked on a criticism of the Bible. After a lengthy discussion he left with a suspicion that I and my Poles remained unconvinced by his arguments.

The boys in my room, despite the repeated orders to discontinue their collective worship, continued to sing their hymn every day.

Once in a while the camp management provided free movies. The screen was set up in one of our barracks and the projecting machine on a small platform behind the spectators, who stood jammed in tightly. The shorter men were out of luck, as they seldom got even a glimpse of the screen. All five of the pictures I saw during my stay were straight propaganda extolling the joy of living and the happiness of U.S.S.R. citizens. Technically they were primitive, and the plot was always the same. The hero was always a young husky farmer living on a *kolkhoz*, that is, a state collective farm. He drove a tractor and sang lustily while at work. A beautiful peasant girl assisted him and brought him a basket of rich food and excellent wine for his noonday meal. At the close of day, when the work was done, the two principal actors sat with other members of the farm about a picturesque open fire and sang

rollicking songs. This hearty eating and drinking on the screen always aroused resentment in me and my hungry companions.

Russian villagers often came to look at us. The guards always warned them not to come too close to the fence. One day a woman touched the wires, paying no attention to the sentries. The nearest sentry leveled his gun, aimed, and fired. The woman fell. The soldier blinked. Then he ran up to her and scratched his head and said, "What did I do that for? Killing a person that way."

It was whispered among the prisoners that our food would be better if it were not for the thieving of the Soviet cook. This must have been true, for one day the Commander appeared in our enclosure with a group of soldiers. He went straight to the kitchen building, and I saw him take out his revolver as he walked through the door. In a few minutes there was a report, and immediately the Commander reappeared with his men and left. One of the Poles on K.P. duty dashed out of the kitchen, white as a ghost.

"What happened?" I asked.

"He shot the cook."

One day Jan ran into our room to say, "Some high Russian officials have just arrived. They've come from Kiev." This was the opportunity I had been waiting for. I borrowed an overcoat from one of the soldiers—it was too cold to go out without one. I sought out a Polish noncom who spoke excellent Russian, and together we trailed the officials, who were inspecting the camp. After they had gone into the office, we waited at the door. The sentry would not let us in. After two hours he yielded, and my interpreter and I were admitted.

We faced a table covered with empty beer bottles. A well-groomed officer sat behind it, and four others stood around him. When I requested to be taken to my embassy in Moscow, they looked at me with curiosity, then barraged me with questions. I gathered that they took me for a spy, a representative of the British Intelligence Service. One of them picked up my hat and examined the band inside. However,

they were courteous and promised they would give my request consideration.

"Why don't you write a letter to the American Embassy in Moscow," suggested one of them. "In Russian, of course. We'll be glad to forward it."

Following this advice, I wrote three letters to our embassy in Moscow. No reply or word about them ever reached me.

Just before bedtime one evening, one of our men came in with a mat of straw, which he spread out for himself on the floor. We all wanted to know where he had got it.

"I've woven it myself, but it's up to you to guess where I got the straw."

Walking in the yard the next morning, we noticed that part of the thatched roof on an outbuilding was missing. That evening all of us had straw mats. They were thin, but even a couple of inches of straw between us and the bare boards of the floor was an improvement. There was a lot of shouting and running around among the Russian soldiers when they discovered that the whole roof of the outbuilding was gone, but no punishment followed. On the contrary! Several wagon-loads of straw were brought into our enclosure a few days later, and about half of us got enough to make ourselves mattresses. These did not wear, however. In three weeks they had crumbled and fallen apart, and what remained of them was collected and burned. Once again we were back to our hard floors.

A Russian came into our room one day and said to me, "Get ready. You're leaving."

Hastily I packed my few possessions in a small cardboard box. I said farewell to Michael and Jan with real sadness at having to part. The other men looked at me with curiosity—and with pity since I did not know why I was being taken and where I would be sent. The Russian led me towards the gate, and as I was leaving our enclosure I waved once more towards the many faces at the window of my barracks.

My guide and I turned a corner, and a sharp wind struck us. I turned up the collar of my thin coat. A truck was sta-

tioned at the gate. I climbed in and stood on the open platform in the wind and falling snow. A Russian officer standing by the guardhouse asked me if I had no overcoat. When I shook my head, he ordered the nearest soldier to take off the jacket he was wearing. It was a thick, cotton-padded hip-length coat, fashioned snugly around the neck. I gratefully slid my arms into the already warm garment, buttoned it up, and stuck my blue hands into the pockets. I regretted that it was not longer, that it did not come down to my ankles.

Four Russian soldiers got in the truck, it started, and we lurched forward. The sides of the truck were low, and the road was very rough. It was not easy to stay on our feet. The road seemed nothing but a succession of holes and frozen ruts, and the trip was extremely rough. Once I thought we couldn't get through: both rear wheels went down so deep that the axles seemed to be rubbing on the ground. The driver, used to these difficulties, backed up and tore out of the gulley. The snow continued to fall, and the sharpness of the wind did not diminish. But the ride was not without interest. For the first time in four weeks I was outside an enclosure.

The truck went down a lane lined with birches on both sides and stopped at the guardhouse of the next enclosure. Here a mass of Polish civilians came up to the barbed wire to look at us. I waved my hand to them, and some waved back. We drove off again through a village consisting of a row of houses on each side of the road. The houses were in fairly good condition, but there was a strange silence everywhere, and I saw no one moving around. Our truck made for a hill, and there I saw the buildings of the old monastery. They were the headquarters of the five enclosures of our camp, and I guessed that they were my destination.

We drove up a very sharp incline, passed through the gates, and stopped in a square bounded by low two-story buildings. Many Polish officers were wandering around. A soldier led me through a small gate to a larger house surrounded by a neglected garden. I was taken into a spacious office. An officer greeted me with a smile. I recognized the man who, on the

first day of my arrival, had promised to give me the best quarters in the camp. He asked me questions, but our conversation was limited to the few words of Russian I had picked up. He introduced me to two civilians. They were dressed like peasants, but peasants who can afford the best in goods and tailoring. I gathered that they had come down from Moscow. They bowed and smiled courteously, watching me sharply at the same time. Maybe something would have come out of the introduction if we had been able to converse, but after a series of smiles and penetrating looks they said goodbye. The Commander turned me over to an orderly. Again I was made to understand that I was going to be given the best quarters. At parting, the Commander shook hands, then put his hand in his pocket, and handed me a shiny red apple. My pleasure at this gift was genuine, for I hadn't seen any fruit since the day I had eaten green apples before being taken prisoner by the Red Army.

My guide took me to the stables and a small bedroom beyond. He told me to sit down on one of the two very dirty iron bedsteads and left me. In fifteen minutes he was back with a bowl of hot soup and a plate of potatoes. It was the first real meal I had had in Russia. When I had finished, bowl and plate looked as if they had been polished. Then he asked what I wanted, and I told him some long winter underwear. He blinked with wonderment when I pulled up my trouser leg to demonstrate the briefness of my drawers. He promised to see what he could do, then took me to one of the two-story buildings. We went through several rooms, then stopped in a small one on the second floor, and he told me I was to live there.

This room was full of Polish majors and captains, who, on learning that I was an American, showed themselves very friendly. There were twenty-two of them—all medical men, either doctors or dentists. Most of them had been on the staff of the Ujazdowski Hospital in Warsaw or on the medical staff of the University of Warsaw. They had been captured as a unit and brought to this camp with their commander, General

Szarecki, a doctor. Though I had not known them in Warsaw, I remembered having heard many of their names. Some of them knew of the work of our church in Poland.

During my imprisonment in Russia I found a gratifying fellowship in associating with these cultured, charming men.

When it was time to retire that night, there was no room on the floor for me. Every inch was taken. But my new companions, with true Polish lightheartedness, said, "*Jakos to bedzie!*" ("It will work out somehow!"). They drew up their legs as best they could, and I was able to lie down. Dr. Frejd, a famous specialist in tropical diseases, came over and asked, "Don't you have an overcoat or a blanket?"

"No, I lost everything on the way."

"I have a rubber mattress. You may have it."

He went back to his corner, returned with the mattress, and helped me to blow it up. It looked like a wonderful bed, but I hesitated to accept it. "What about you?" I asked.

My question embarrassed him, and he tried to make excuses for his gift. "You see, none of the others has anything like it. There's no reason why I should have a better bed than they. With you it's different. You have nothing, but we have our army coats and blankets."

Despite the softness of my bed I did not sleep well. The doctors, still clinging to good habits of hygiene, had opened one of the windows, and I lay shivering and yearning for the warm, stinking room I had shared with Jan and the other privates.

The next morning I swung into the routine of my new surroundings. The doctors, rigorous in their cleanliness, gave much time to washing, brushing of clothes, and housekeeping. Razors were scarce, and many had grown beards. Like many others I had a moustache. It was very black and gave me a dual personality, for the ends had a tendency to turn up on one side, and to droop on the other.

The food in the officers' enclosure was prepared by the officers themselves. We had less soup, more vegetables, and once in a while a small piece of meat. Once a week we were handed

out one tablespoonful of sunflower seed oil per man. When not rancid it was palatable, and it was rich in vitamins.

In contrast to the privates, who had been quiet and apathetic, the officers were excitable and high-strung and let off steam in frequent quarrels. But they also showed a surprising vitality in organizing courses of study. There were classes in German, English, and Russian. I joined the Russian class and bought a book for beginners in the camp canteen. The many experts in our camp gave lectures on their respective subjects. Dr. Frejd told the story of his trip up the Amazon River to the city of Iquitos. Strange that we who were seeing war and death and horror could sit there entranced listening to his narrative of adventures and hairbreadth escapes—forgetful of the question mark over our future.

Our recreations were varied. I had brought with me my homemade set of chess, and it was easy to find partners. Another favorite game of ours was Questions and Answers. One of us would ask a simple question like: What is the longest river in the world? Or: What is the highest lake? The one who answered correctly would be the one to give the next question. The quizzes were usually on the high school level, and we were often ashamed at how much we had forgotten, but the doctors explained that our deteriorating memory came from our diet. It was a great comfort to have an excuse for our ignorance.

Then there was the popular sport of talking about things we had eaten in former times. I would tell about our American dishes—hot rolls, flapjacks, pancakes, and griddlecakes; baked beans; T-bone steaks and fried chicken. Frejd would describe succulent South American dishes, Professor Zawodzinski the meals he used to get for one ruble when he lived as a student in the Petrograd of prerevolutionary Russia. We talked of the famous eating places of Vienna, Paris, Marseilles, and Cannes.

One night Dr. Gondek was sitting with his head in his hands. When I spoke to him he lifted a face flushed with fever.

“Are you ill?” I asked.

“Yes. I don’t think I can last very long.”

He was taken to the hospital, which was in a separate building. The only difference between the hospital and our building was that the sick had real beds with straw sacks to sleep on. Two days later he was dead. I was assigned his place in our room, and I inherited a possession of his, a cotton bag. It was meant to be stuffed with straw, I suppose, but since there was no straw I used it as a sleeping bag. It was a comfortable thing to snuggle into.

Dr. Frejd saw me one day examining the barbed wire of our enclosure. "Thinking about getting out?" he asked. "It's no use, I assure you."

"These wires wouldn't be so hard to cut," I replied, "if one had some sort of tool."

"Dressed as you are and hungry, you wouldn't get very far on these snowcovered plains. Sooner or later you'd have to stop at a village, and they'd turn you over to the police. It would mean prison, or deportation to some camp worse than this one, maybe death."

Others must also have realized the impossibility of escape for during my stay not one attempt was made.

One day eighty of us, escorted by two armed soldiers, were marched to the village bathhouse. While the first twenty bathed, the rest of us waited. The sun was shining bright. Professor Zawodzinski and I, having noticed a blacksmith shop not far away, sauntered up to it and sat down on a broken-down thresher. The blacksmith and his assistant stood in the open doorway chatting with a few prisoners.

"It would be interesting to see how much work these Russians will do while we're sitting here," said Zawodzinski. "One hears so much about the efficiency and the output of the workmen under the present system."

"Let's time them," I suggested, glancing at my watch.

When we got up from our thresher an hour and a half later, we agreed that the two were hardly *udarniks* (superworkers). They had struck exactly three blows with their hammers. In between strokes they had leaned against the door jambs talking politics.

After the bath we were allowed to go to the village store. It did not take long to make an inventory of the goods in the glass cases: shoe polish, black and tan, and shoestrings; sewing thread; sewing needles, extremely large and clumsy; primitive pocket knives; metal buttons; ink; lanterns with wicks; and lamp chimneys. After changing some of my Polish money into *cherventsi*, I bought thread, needles, and shoestrings, for although we had a camp canteen where we were permitted to make purchases, its stock was limited most of the time to only two articles, shoe polish and toilet water. The toilet water was bought by our guards, who doused themselves with it to our amusement.

On a walk in the yard I met the naval captain who had sat next to me in the truck that took us from Rowne. He told me that about twelve families—wives and children—had been brought to our camp, and that his wife was living in barracks just outside our enclosure. She had taken a job in a factory a few miles away, and he could see her once in a while. Through her we had news of the outside world. We learned with surprise that in spite of the Russo-German pact there was great fear of German aggression among the Russian people—a fear that seemed nurtured by the government itself.

Among the well-known doctors in our camp was General Szarecki, professor of surgery at the University of Warsaw. The camp authorities had appointed him head of our hospital. He was a small, gray-haired man, with a gray moustache. His brilliant, witty conversation was a source of delight. One day he strode briskly into our room, saying, "Well, I've had my first operation in camp." We surrounded him.

"One of the men had an infected hand. It had to be lanced. I had nothing but a kitchen knife to use for a lancet and sterilized it. Of course, there were no supplies except cotton, bandages, and tincture of iodine. The real difficulty, however, was the anesthetic."

He made a dramatic pause, then continued, "I didn't know what to do until I decided to give him Hungarian gas."

One of the listening doctors wanted to be sure he had heard right. "Hungarian gas?" he asked.

"Yes, gentlemen. I made the patient look towards the window, and coming up from behind I let him have it. I mean—hm—a neat little knock on the head with a mallet. He went down like an angel, and I had the hand lanced in no time." He grinned at us, enjoying our surprise. "I think the operation was successful."

During most of my sojourn in Tchortkovo, the health of eight thousand men in the camp and the sanitation were under the official supervision of one Russian, a male nurse by training. A few days before I left, Szarecki told me of the arrival of a Russian woman doctor. She had been graduated from medical school two years before and had had a short practical experience. She was intelligent and aware of her shortcomings, and listened like an attentive pupil to her Polish colleagues. She did not interfere with the established routine, and her relations with the Poles were of the friendliest.

My roommates had repeatedly been offered medical jobs by the Soviet authorities. They refused, still full of indignation at the manner in which the Soviet Union had joined hands with Germany in the invasion and new partitioning of their country. They hoped, moreover, to be taken out of Russia to where they could join the ranks of the Allies. A chance to fight the Germans once more was the leitmotif of all conversations and plans.

In one of my numerous examinations, I had been asked if I would not like to work. Remembering my first experience when I said I was a pastor—a *pop* as they called it—the next time I was asked about my profession I simply said "teacher."

"How would you like a job teaching English?" they asked.

"I don't know. Where would it be?"

"In one of our larger cities most likely."

"But I have my home and my work in Warsaw."

"You can find a home and plenty of work right here."

"But I have a wife and child over there!"

"Don't let that bother you. What's the matter with our

women? You'll have no trouble finding another wife. And in time you can have as many children as you wish."

They had an answer for everything, so I tried a different line. "How much would you pay?" I asked.

"Around 800 rubles a month." From the way it was said, I gathered the sum was supposed to be attractive.

I asked, "How much does a pair of boots cost in the black market?"

"Six or seven hundred rubles."

"No thanks."

At nine one morning an N.K.V.D. man came for me. I was to report to the Commandant. Waiting in his anteroom, I noticed on the desk a small, gilt-edged book beautifully bound in leather—about the size of a New Testament. I wondered if I had come across a secret Christian among Soviet officials. When an officer came in I asked him about the book.

"Don't you know? It's the speeches of Stalin," he replied. I slowly spelled out the Cyrillic letters in gold on the expensive binding.

I was admitted to the Commandant. He said, "A contingent of women, children, civilians, and privates will be shipped west this morning. Do you want to go back with them, or would you prefer to wait here until your embassy in Moscow sends for you? Make your choice."

Nothing had prepared me for this. "How much time do I have to make up my mind?"

"You'll have to hurry. The group from this enclosure is leaving in twenty minutes."

I rushed back to my companions. Every one of them advised me to remain. "How do you know you'll really be taken to Poland? What if they ship you to Siberia instead?"

One of the dentists, stroking his glossy beard, asked, "Is it so bad living here with us? Wait till you fall into the hands of the Germans."

I'd have to make this decision alone. I walked down into the yard and across to the ruins of the old church. There I looked up through the broken arches and asked God for guid-

ance. No strange voices spoke to me, no mystical sign was given me, but suddenly I clearly realized that I should go. Calm in spirit I returned to my friends and told them. They began at once to scribble notes and begged me to deliver them to their wives and parents in Warsaw. The whole enclosure was in a turmoil. The few that were leaving were rushing around saying goodbye, packing their meager possessions, stuffing notes and letters into their pockets. Men were storming me, pushing letters into my hands. "Deliver this for me, will you?"

One of the officers gave me a letter to his uncle, a priest in America. An older man said goodbye: "God bless you and good luck to you. I know that I'll never—" He wept.

Roll call for those who were leaving, a few more handshakes, one more glance, and I broke away.

We marched through the yard, where the camp commander and a group of officials were standing, and out of the gate. Here three wagons were waiting, and we helped pile into them bundles, baskets, and boxes that belonged to the returning women and children, who then settled on top of their things. I said goodbye to the Russians and waved back once more to the crowd of Poles standing on the hill behind the barbed wire.

Neither I nor their loved ones in Poland would ever see these men again. Maybe even then their fate was sealed. Shortly after my departure the camp of Tchortkovo was closed. The prisoners were transferred to Kozielsk and Starobylevsk. Later all trace of them was lost. Were Drs. Pajak, Sroczynski, Zawodzinski, and the gentlehearted Frejd among those whose decomposed bodies were found later in the Katyn forest? Had I stayed I would undoubtedly have shared their fate.

For some reason, I was to accompany the women and children and was told to climb beside the driver of the last wagon. But I did not ride long. The road was very bad, full of holes under the mud and snow, and before long things began slipping off the wagons—bundles, a basket, a suitcase, a cardboard box spilling its pitiful contents. Each time something fell, I would

get off, pick it up, and toss it back where it belonged. Getting tired of climbing off and on, I trudged after our caravan keeping an eye on the baggage.

There were no Russian soldiers with us, and in a sense we were free. I could have walked off in any direction, and no one would have stopped me. But such a plan did not even enter my mind. Why undertake the trek west on foot and alone if the Soviet Government was willing to ship me back? So I walked happily on, hardly conscious of the water in my shoes and the gnawing hunger—my thoughts on our home in Warsaw.

We passed the village and an enclosure where prisoners were pacing behind the wires. We waved and shouted at them, and they returned our greeting. We passed other prisoners working in fields. Word of our return must have got around the whole camp, for men came running with notes and letters. We took them all, knowing what even the most tenuous contact with those at home means to a prisoner.

In the early afternoon we reached an enclosure full of civilians. It was to be our stop for the night. I wondered where I would be able to find a place to sit, let alone lie down for the night. The barracks were overflowing with humanity. As soon as I had helped the women and children off the wagons, I wandered off in search of a friend who, I had been told, was living in this group—Dr. (now Colonel) Antoni Stefanowski. He had been our family physician for years, and a dear friend. All over Warsaw, among rich and poor, he was known for his professional skill and beloved for his kindness and generosity. At one time he had been the President of the Polish Veterans' Association and Marshall Pilsudski's personal physician. The Russians appointed him medical supervisor of his enclosure.

When I found him I was shocked. Hania had often teased him about his great height. Now worn and gaunt, he looked even taller. He was obviously very sick. The army uniform hung on his huge frame in loose folds. His left hand was wrapped in a dirty bandage. Only the patient brown eyes were the same.

He was thunderstruck to see me. We talked—and then he invited me to have supper with his group. They had a table, which was a luxury, but it was so small that we had to eat in shifts. Shortly after having eaten my soup, I began to say good-night, although I had no idea where I could find a corner.

"You can't go," he protested. "You will sleep right here, with us." Hearing some of the others grumbling about there being no extra space, he said, "Warfield is my guest, and he will sleep beside me." Two deep shelves served as beds. They were slightly inclined and covered with a layer of straw and looked comfortable. He pulled half of his khaki army cloak over me, I slept as I had not slept for many weeks and awoke refreshed. It was fortunate, for that day we were to begin our long trip back.

All morning we stood in long columns, fifteen abreast, while the authorities, with much brow-wrinkling and head-scratching, organized us for the journey. Twice there was roll call, to which we had to answer by name. We were counted at least a dozen times. Evidently the number of prisoners did not coincide with the lists.

Playing nurse and handy man to the women and children was no treat, as the previous day had taught me. Thinking of the long trip ahead on the train, I edged away from them and joined a group of civilians and soldiers. It looked as if we never would start, but at last the signal was given.

We marched out, came to the narrow-gauge railroad, and piled into the little freight cars that I remembered from my first trip. As the train moved we looked back at the camp with indescribable relief to be off, with pity for those who were staying, with resentment towards our captors.

In the afternoon we stopped in a small town, and here we left the train. In columns five men abreast we were marched through the streets. Most of the houses were neatly white-washed. Many women and children looked at us from their yards. They seemed friendly. From time to time we called out to them, making jocular remarks. Most of the children were poorly dressed, and almost all the women wore skirts

of the same color. When I spoke of this to my companions, one of them explained: "That's because factories here, in order to save labor and expense, make nothing but red goods one year, blue the next, green the third." There must be something in what he said, I thought, looking at the villagers.

The purpose in marching us through the town was to get us to the standard-gauge railroad station. Here a long line of empty freight cars awaited us. Satisfied not to have to march any more, we climbed in and heard the doors slam into place.

I never found out the exact number of men confined in our car, but judging from the density guessed that there must be between eighty and ninety. The car was similar to hundreds of others packed with human freight, and, like the one in which I had traveled before, it had two small barred windows close to the roof. There were two tiers of sleeping shelves instead of three. Moving about was extremely difficult, and we had to sleep in shifts. Only twice during the long journey were we let out to stretch our legs—the first time at Kiev, the second time near the Russian-Polish border—and at both stops we got a hot meal. Otherwise we received only black bread and cold water, neither as plentiful as on the former journey. As before, there was no toilet, but one of the men had a sharp knife, and with this we cut a fairly large hole in the floor, which we used for a sewer.

Our train moved slowly westward. Frequently, for long periods, we stood on some siding near a small station or out in the open country. Time hung heavily on our hands. Our one dog-eared pack of cards was in constant use, but since the number of players was limited, the rest of us dozed, yawned, talked, and quarreled.

Shortly before leaving the last enclosure in Tchortkovo, I had got acquainted with a civil engineer from Warsaw, Casimir Mosdorf. I found him a delightful companion, a man of charm and culture. Though in his sixties, he stood up under the rigors of our imprisonment and journey with more equanimity and buoyancy than many of the younger men. Some buttons had come off his coat, and I offered to sew them on for him, but

the light in the car was dim, even during the day, and the rocking and jolting made it difficult to get the needle into the holes of the buttons. There was plenty of time, however, and eventually my sewing was finished.

It was Mosdorf's and my turn to lie down on the sleeping shelves, and we got to the upper tier. Through the little window we saw the wide bed of the Dnieper River.

"We are approaching Kiev!" exclaimed Mosdorf.

After much standing and backing, our cars pulled into the freight yards of Kiev. The doors were opened, and we were marched through a street in a part of the city that seemed deserted. A handful of pedestrians scurried by, and a streetcar clanked by almost empty. A group of children seemed surprisingly well fed and well dressed. Their clothes were well tailored and made of good material. I had seen no children so prosperous and happy since entering the Soviet Union, and I asked the man behind me where they could have come from.

"They are children of army officers or of high government officials. You can always tell them by their dress and appearance," said the man. He was a mechanic who had spent several years in the Soviet Union.

We stopped in a large yard behind a building. Already the men ahead of us were washing their hands and faces under a waterspout. A few small pieces of soap were lying in a tin basin beside it. We had been under way for a week now, and during that time I had often thought of the luxury of getting a good wash. I got some lather out of a tiny piece of soap and scrubbed my face and hands. But not even the ice-cold water could refresh me. I was too weary.

A column of prisoners came out of the building and marched away. When the last one had gone, we were taken inside. It was a large hall, furnished with long tables and benches. Tin spoons and bowls were laid at each place, and after we had sat down Soviet soldiers came in with large kettles of steaming soup, which they ladled out. Baskets with chunks of black bread were passed around. The food was consumed with lightning speed and in complete silence. At a command we stood

up and went out, regretfully leaving the warm building. While our column was formed again, another one was already filing into the eating hall. On the way back to the train, we passed a number of local people, who eyed us curiously. They were not actually in rags, but according to Western standards their clothes were shabby—old clumsy shoes, baggy trousers, well-worn, patched jackets and overcoats. The men all wore shapeless workmen's caps; the women, shawls or large kerchiefs over their heads.

A small, gray-haired woman, standing close to the curb, handed out cigarettes as we walked by. We thanked her, and to our delight she answered in Polish.

"Who are you?" one of the men asked.

"I am a Pole. I've been trapped in this land and have lived here for the last thirty years, but I love Poland and how I wish I could go with you."

The next morning our train continued westward. Whenever I had a chance I climbed to the little window to look at the countryside. Mosdorf, who had spent many years in Russia in his younger days, informed me that we were on the main line to Sarny. The landscape was wild and desolate, especially along the railroad tracks. Station after station stood in ruins, and many houses were empty shells. Some of the men said that the desolation and ruins dated back to the First World War and the Russian Revolution.

"But why weren't they rebuilt, why isn't the land cultivated?" I inquired.

"They think it isn't worth it," said Mosdorf. "They think it's rather close to the Polish border."

"But what about the land? Thousands of acres are going to waste! On the Polish side, the fields are tilled to the very border."

"What's a hundred or several thousand acres," said Mosdorf, "when you consider the size of Russia?"

Two days later we were released again. I was so weak that I reeled as I walked. There were field kitchens, and we received some thick vegetable soup. There even was a small piece

of meat in mine. After the meal we were allowed to walk about. Some of my companions who knew Russian talked to the guards and learned that ours was not the only convoy of prisoners going west—in fact, ours was the fourteenth that had passed through this station in one day. Great numbers of men were evidently sharing our suffering.

In the afternoon we crossed the Polish border. There was such a difference in the appearance of the countryside that one had the impression that a leaf in a storybook had been turned. There were many villages with well-kept buildings, and the land looked carefully cultivated. Our first stop inside Poland was Rokitno. I shall never forget the two hours we spent there. Many of the inhabitants had come to the station to see us, maybe to learn something about relatives who had been carried away into Russia. They did not come empty-handed. From our locked car we could hear the guards shouting, "*Davay na zad!*" ("Get back!"). The people were pressing close, and the guards tried to drive them off. But the people were tenacious: while some were retreating, others, behind the backs of the guards, sneaked up. Through our little window I saw a girl with a large milk can full of coffee run up to us. We handed down everything that would hold liquid, and almost every man got a drink of sweetened coffee. My share was but a scant two fingers' worth, but I sipped it slowly, and the hot liquid carried delightful warmth to the tips of my quivering nerves. This drink was something more than coffee: it was the essence of peaceful times and home life. Most of us had tears in our eyes.

We passed through Sarny, Kowel, and Luboml, thrilled at the well-known names. At one of the stations an old woman came to the train with four large loaves of bread. But the Russian guard would not let her give it to us.

"Get back," he shouted, "or I'll shoot."

The old woman did not move quickly enough, and he gave her a push which sent her reeling. The loaves fell into the mud. Indignation boiled up in our car. Hungry men could not look quietly at good rye bread so close and yet beyond

their grasp. We could not understand the attitude of the guards, since few Russians had been consciously brutal towards us. Their attitude had been merely one of complete indifference. Perhaps now they were carrying out instructions.

During the next day our excitement grew. On reaching the river Bug, which at that time was the dividing line between German and Soviet territory, we were told to get out and were marched along the railroad tracks towards the river. We were surprised to see the fortifications on the Russian side. Were the Soviet Union and Germany already distrusting each other? We commented in whispers on the masses of barbed-wire entanglements and the deep antitank ditches that stretched across the fields into the distance. On the riverbank we halted. Ahead of us was the great railroad bridge that had been destroyed by bombs and dynamite during the September fighting. To the left of the broken spans was a narrow pontoon bridge. On our side of the river stood a group of German officers, very elegant, very haughty in their gray-green uniforms—in sharp contrast to the grimy, tired prisoners in our long column. We went down to the edge of the river, crossed the pontoon bridge, then climbed up the other side and formed into a column again.

On the German side there stood a crowd of civilians, mostly women. By the long coats and saucepan hats worn by the men, we recognized that they were Jews. We asked them what they were doing here. They explained that they had fled Wilno during the September fighting and were now going home; that the Germans were now trading them to the Russians for Polish war prisoners. The truth dawned on us. We were the exchange prisoners—Poles who had been carried away into Soviet-occupied territory being exchanged for Jews from German-occupied territory.

The Germans—our new masters—immediately placed us in freight cars, where we were packed in even more tightly than before. Now we hardly had room to stand, much less to lie down. The floors were wet with creosote, and there were no sleeping shelves. All those who had suitcases were ordered to

place them in a separate car. The luggage was never seen again.

From now on we made excellent time. The Germans seemed anxious to get us to our destination, and in a little while we came to the city of Chelm. After a brief stop we moved on.

The two little windows in our car were not barred, and all afternoon men had been whispering about the possibility of escape. Within sight of Lublin, one prisoner, unable to wait any longer, climbed out through one of the little windows and jumped into a ditch. It was a foolish thing to do, since it was not yet dark. The guards in the last coach of the train must have spotted him immediately, for we heard many shots being fired. We never found out whether the fugitive got away. In a short time we pulled into Lublin Station.

It was quite dark when we finally were allowed to get out. German soldiers carrying lanterns were everywhere, and they guarded us closely while we were fed a hot meal by a self-appointed committee of local Poles. As we stood there eating, we all talked about how to escape. A few, not waiting for another chance, right there decided to leave us. Despite the watching Germans, they disappeared into the night. (These were successful; I met some of them later in Warsaw.) Fully expecting to be released by the Germans, I never considered following this example. Then, too, I had no close friends or relatives in Lublin, and I would have had no one to turn to. That night, as the cars rolled along, many prisoners climbed through the windows and dropped into the ditch. We could tell from the frequent firing that came from the guards' car.

In Deblin we had to leave our train and cross the Vistula on foot, for here, too, the bridge had been destroyed. We walked over planks which had been laid over the spans. On the other side we climbed into another freight car.

We reached Radom in the middle of the night and left the train. It was very cold. We marched through the empty, brilliantly lit streets to the barracks of a former Polish regiment. At last our long journey was ended. I stumbled into one of the buildings and threw myself on the floor beside others. Many were already snoring. It had taken us more than nine

days to accomplish the journey, and the sensation of resting on a floor that did not move and rattle was strange but comforting.

Breakfast under our new masters was even more meager than it had been under the Russians. It consisted of a much smaller slice of bread and a cup of lukewarm unsweetened rye coffee. Around nine we were ordered to line up in the yard, five deep. For the first time we sampled German treatment. The sergeant who inspected us swore profusely. Anyone whom he didn't like he kicked in the seat of his pants.

Standing in line, we heard that we were not going to be released—that we were going to be shipped to a factory in western Germany. We were due to leave for Breslau that day. The Russians had made us believe that they were giving us our freedom. Instead, they had exchanged us like slaves, for labor to the Germans.

I was desperate. To be so close to home and not to be released, to be packed into freight cars again and shipped to new prison camps, was more than I could stand. I had been whispering excitedly to Mosdorf, who was next to me, when a tall, well-dressed officer came into the yard. Immediately my plan was formed. When the officer drew closer I exchanged a few quick words with Mosdorf, then stepped out of line and stood at attention.

"What do you want?" asked the officer.

"I have no business being held here. I'm a pastor, an American citizen."

"Where are your papers?"

"I have none. They were taken by the Russians, who held me prisoner."

"Well, you know there's a war on, I just can't take a man's word without any proof for what he asserts," he said after a little hesitation.

Seeing my only chance slip by, I shouted, "Look at me. Do you think I'm lying?"

Then Mosdorf, in excellent German, said, "There are many older men in our group, many who are too weak, too sick to be of use in a factory."

The German meditated, then said, "I have no instructions about releasing anybody. But I'll take the matter up with my superiors. Now get back in line. You will hear from me."

We were dismissed by the sergeant with many more oaths. Having learned that there was a canteen in the camp open to us we immediately asked permission to go there. After waiting for an hour, I was permitted to join a group of ten who were taken by a guard to the little store.

What delicacies! Festoons of smoked Polish sausage; golden-brown, crispy white rolls; cakes with real sugar icing, and jars of rainbow-colored hard candy. There were even chocolate bars in the glass cases. I bought a quantity of these luxuries, knowing how glad my comrades would be. For months we had dreamed of white bread and meat, and now what a feast! The result of this orgy was what could have been expected. My shrunken stomach could not take care of the rich food hastily swallowed, and shortly after eating I got violently sick.

The afternoon came, and the officer to whom Mosdorf and I had spoken did not appear. Despair gripped me again when the sergeant, after lining us up, marched us through the camp towards the gates. Other columns of men were passing us, also on their way to the war factories of western Germany. A group of privates came up and, recognizing me, smiled and waved. They had been my companions in the camp of Tchortkovo.

Halfway towards the gates our column was halted by an officer, and then the Commander himself, accompanied by an aide, approached and looked us over. Those who wore the Polish uniform were picked out, along with others who looked young and strong enough for manual labor. The rest of us were dismissed, but I was told to come to the office, and to bring along five prisoners who spoke German. An officer explained that we would be needed to write out official releases for those who would be allowed to go home—that there was authorization to release civilians unfit for work.

"We have no prepared certificates of release and no secre-

tarial help to make them out, but I'll give you paper and a statement which you can copy for each man. Those of you who know how to type can use these three typewriters, and the rest of you will write in longhand."

We set to work, feeling enthusiastic for the first time in weeks, realizing that each copied slip would bring freedom to one of us. Several well-dressed, attractive women came into the room. We gathered from the conversation that they belonged to the local Red Cross chapter. They fluttered about the German at the desk, smiling, chattering, and flirting. We nudged each other, not realizing that it was through these very women that the Germans had given any consideration to our plea for release. While several of them were making a fuss over the officer, another one came over and offered to help us with the typing. Her fingers flew over the keys, but she managed to whisper that they were trying to enlarge the number of prisoners considered for release. It dawned on us that these seemingly giddy women were playing a part, using their blandishments as the best means to obtain favors for prisoners. They had discovered that German officers, as a rule, could not resist attractive women, especially when they were smartly dressed and could speak their language.

These women—early as it was in the occupation—were already acting as part of the great Polish underground, which was to become, in the months and years that followed, the mainspring of resistance against the Germans.

For hours the German officer sat at the head of the table calling out the names of those to be released. After looking each man over, he filled in his name on one of the blanks that we had copied. Then he stamped it with the official seal and handed it to the lucky one. Suddenly he looked up and my heart started to thump as I heard him say, "Where is that American pastor who spoke to me in the yard?"

"He is sitting there at the table writing," his orderly answered.

"Tell him to come here."

He smiled at me and said, "Have you made one out for yourself?"

"Not yet," I answered.

"Here. Take this blank and make it out in your own name. I want you to have one."

I could hardly write. Finally my release was safely tucked into my breast pocket. I could have gone at once, but I stayed to help with the other releases. We continued to write into the night until one of the Germans came and told us we must go back to our barracks. It was now too late for me to leave the camp. That night I tossed restlessly on the floor, promising myself to leave the next morning. When day came I went once more to the commanding officer's room and showed several other men how to fill out the slips. Then I returned to the barracks for my few things. Several Roman Catholic sisters, with large baskets on their arms, were bustling around. These good souls, I found out, had smuggled in civilian clothes for the soldiers, who, dressed as peasants, could easily slip out in the company of workmen employed in the camp.

My feelings were mixed as I approached the exit with two other civilians. We drew out our releases, and the guards waved us on. Once out of sight of the Germans, I stopped short. Joy filled my heart: I was a free man at last. But I was dismayed also to find that I was afraid. I stared at the crowds who had come to look at the prisoners leaving camp, and the thought struck me that from now on I would have to make my own decisions. There was no one to tell me to march, to halt, to turn, to eat—no one to issue orders and to regulate every detail of my life. The change was too sudden, and a feeling close to panic seized me.

Mosdorf and several others came out of the gate, and they called to me. We decided to celebrate by going to a coffee-house. People stared, for we were dirty, bearded, and unkempt. We took our place at one of the marble-topped tables and ordered cakes and coffee. The Germans had not yet succeeded in draining Poland of all her supplies, and the coffee and pastries were delicious. I had never been one of those to whom

coffee is all-important, but this cupful did something to me. It reinstated me as a human being, brought me confidence, made life appear less hopeless.

Warsaw was only some thirty miles away, but we felt suddenly completely devoid of strength and could not face the hike. There were four of us, and we decided to pool our resources and hire a taxi to carry us home.

The closer we drew to the capital, the more signs of war we saw: blown-up bridges, burned-out houses, gutted villages, and towns in ruins, some so thoroughly destroyed that not even chimneys were left.

I had witnessed the first seven days of the bombing of Warsaw. I had heard the tales of refugees who had left the city after me. Yet I was unprepared for what I now saw. We approached from Pulawska Street, which had been lined on both sides with modern, four- and five-story apartment houses. In their place were low mounds of broken bricks, mortar, and a wild jumble of steel girders and rafters. Unexpected sections of wall remained here and there, and against one of them, high up in the air, an iron bed hung with its mattress and the remains of sheets flapping in the wind. These gray rags appeared to me as the symbol—the flag—of the New Order which had come to rule over the city.

We got out of the taxi on Jerusalem Avenue, not far from the new Main Railroad Station. Mosdorf and I said goodbye to our companions and, as our homes lay in the same direction, went down Marszalkowska Street together. We had to keep to the middle of the street, because the debris from bombed houses still lay as it had fallen, spilled way out. From afar I looked toward the Square of the Saviour, searching for the two spires of the church. One of the towers was not visible; the other one, half shot down, stuck up like a broken matchstick. The Methodist Building was opposite. Would it still be there when we came to it? I grasped Mosdorf's arm when we turned the corner. The Ministry of War, only a block away, was completely bombed and gutted. I turned towards our building. The glass roof was shattered. Three large gaping shell

holes scarred the front. All windowpanes and most of the frames were gone. But the building was still standing. I said goodbye to Mosdorf, and in no time was knocking at my apartment door. Natalie, our maid, answered. With her mouth hanging wide open, she stared at me through her thick glasses.

"Is it really you, sir? You are alive?"

In the hall I came face to face with myself in a mirror, and it was a shock. This sunken-eyed, bearded, dirty, emaciated man!

The apartment was filled with people—refugees from all parts of Poland. But Hania and Mimi were not there. No one knew anything about them, for postal and railroad communications had not been renewed with Bory. It took will power to keep fears at bay—to cling to hope and the belief that they were alive.

Michael and Lydia were occupying my bedroom, and they gave me one of the twin beds. The apartment was cold and as dark as a cave, since the shattered windows had been covered with plywood and brown paper. There were many signs of bullets in the walls, and my study was damaged by shrapnel that had burst inside the window. Jagged pieces of heavy metal peppered the walls and furniture, and many of my books and files were turned into chaff. One drawer was filled with paper which looked as if mice had chewed it to pieces. My desk chair was spiked with metal splinters. Christine told me that the explosion had taken place on the morning of September 8, just after my departure, and at an hour when I was accustomed to work at my desk.

That night I was feverish, probably as a result of the food I had eaten after weeks of starvation. The bed was too comfortable: it surprised me every time I turned by giving under my weight. Even the feel of clean sheets was disturbing to my rest. In the morning Michael and Lydia dressed under their blankets to keep warm. As soon as they had left I got up and dressed and shaved.

Michael and Lydia, in the first days of September, had fled from their home in Bydgoszcz and had come to the capital.

During the bombings of Warsaw they had fled again, this time going east, to a part of the country later occupied by the Soviet Army. They had escaped deportation to a work camp in Russia and had returned to Warsaw a few days before me. Now German terror was raging in Bydgoszcz, and they would have to remain in Warsaw—in our apartment until other accommodations could be found.

Ruth Lawrence and Ellen Newby, our women missionaries, were also back from their flight—back in their apartment in the Methodist Building.

Weak as I was, I went that day to the headquarters of the Polish Red Cross. When I took out the notes I had brought from Tchortkovo, I was surrounded. Mine being the first news from the captives in the Soviet Union, I was showered with questions. For hours I related my experiences. At last exhaustion forced me home and to bed, where I stayed for several days while half of Warsaw filed through my bedroom asking about people who might possibly have been carried away into Russia.

November and December 1939

by HANIA

ON A cold and foggy November morning the stillness of our mountain valley was broken by almost forgotten sounds—the puffing of an engine and a train whistle. I rushed to the window. The long-awaited train—it was only a locomotive—was coming round the bend. At last I would be able to go to Warsaw! At the station I was told that it would be some days before the bridges were sufficiently strengthened to carry the weight of coaches, but I made preparations at once. From the military headquarters, I obtained permission to travel. I learned that I might be able to get a free railroad ticket to Warsaw in New Market, so I clambered into a cattle

car of the first passenger train that left Bory. It was a bitterly cold day. During the three-hour trip we got out several times and crossed bridges on foot, while the train moved cautiously over temporarily repaired tracks.

In New Market I waited for hours, with a crowd that had come on a similar errand. We were all waiting for Herr Lorentz, who issued free passes to refugees. I was admitted at last into the presence of this dignitary, a short, red-faced man with protruding, china-blue eyes.

"Now what is it? Speak up!" he bellowed.

I stated my case and produced my passport.

"Where is your husband?" he asked roughly.

"In Warsaw probably, if he is still alive."

"And how is it you don't know where he is?" he snapped at me.

"We have been separated for almost three months. He left me the last part of August."

"Huh! A coward! So he ran away and left his wife and child, did he?"

My blood boiled. I jumped up from my chair and, in a shaking voice, answered, "You have no right to insult my husband. You may keep your permit. I don't want it." I turned to the door.

In a much milder voice, Herr Lorentz called out, "*Nicht so schnell, meine Dame.* ("Not so fast, my lady.") I was only joking." And he handed me my pass.

People who had returned from Warsaw had told me that food there was extremely high and scarce. I knew I should take some money with me. But our resources were exhausted. I decided to approach Mr. Wilk, who was a wealthy man and always kept much ready cash at home. Apologizing profusely, he said that he had no money on hand. I could not understand his embarrassed air until Lola later explained that the Wilks had buried their money and jewelry in their garden at the very spot where a German sentry was now posted. For months afterwards those who knew this secret watched poor Mr. Wilk with some amusement as he walked around his garden, staring

at the ground and aimlessly circling the sentry who guarded his hidden treasures so well.

On Lola's advice I went to the Jewish shopkeepers—some had by now returned to Bory—with whom we had traded for years. All turned down my request for money, with the exception of young Klagsbald, who at first rolled his eyes hysterically but as I was about to leave whispered that he would be over in the afternoon. It was almost night when he came. He slunk into the house, begged me to lock all doors and lower the shades, and took me to the kitchen, which seemed the safest place to him. From under his shirt collar he produced a greasy and crumpled one-hundred-zloty bill. I wanted to give him a receipt, but he would not accept it, fearing that it might be found on him by the Germans, to whom he had stated that he had no money in his possession.

This money would not last long, and I decided to carry supplies of food which would enable me to spend several days in Warsaw without buying anything. I had small hopes of finding Gaither and feared that a job or a loan would not be available immediately. With the help of friends I got together, for my journey, two military loaves of bread about three weeks old and hard as a rock, a small package of tea, a handful of sugar, one chocolate bar, a cup of lard, some spaghetti, and soup cubes. I also took a blanket; and a box of matches and a candle, because trains were not lighted. All this I stowed into a duffel bag and a Gladstone.

My next concern was clothes. The snow on the ground had turned into slush, and I was glad when Mother unearthed a pair of old galoshes in the attic, and a discarded woolen dress. (After the fighting had ceased around Bory, we had returned to the attic all the trunks and boxes that had been removed under the Mayor's orders in September.) Out of an old shawl that I unraveled I knit myself a pair of drawers such as no one had ever seen. They were Mother's design. They reached from my armpits to below my knees. To complete my traveling costume I wore a kerchief on my head and my unlined summer coat.

Father, Mother, and Mimi escorted me to the station. Saying goodbye we clung to one another, our hearts full of doubt on the outcome of my mission. Lola and Ir had decided, at the last moment, to go to Warsaw with me. Ir, having lost his job and his savings, was seeking a means of livelihood.

We climbed into a freight car. It was empty save for a few wooden crates, on which we seated ourselves. It was unheated, and snow and rain blew in through the half-closed doors. The train crept, inch by inch, over the newly repaired tracks. At Ruda, a bare five miles from our starting point, it stopped, and we got out. Carrying our luggage, we walked across the bridge, which was under repair, to a train waiting on the other side of the stream. Ten miles farther, we repeated this performance. It had turned bitterly cold, and I was thankful for my galoshes and long underwear. By six that afternoon we reached Tarnow, where we had to change trains again. Finding no train to Cracow, we were at a loss what to do. A German official, whom I timidly approached, spat contemptuously instead of answering. A Pole who was working on the tracks told me that there would probably be a train in four hours. I asked him where we could wait, and he motioned towards the open platform. "No waiting rooms for us," he said curtly. I thought I had misunderstood, but he turned from me and walked away.

An icy wind swept the platform where we waited with other passengers. Like us, they all carried bundles of various shapes. Most of them were people whom the war had left stranded far from home. Lola, Ir, and I huddled together for warmth. After a while our legs grew weary, and we sat down on our duffel bags. We ate some hard bread spread thinly with lard, and felt better.

In the dusk we noticed a man wearing a broad band on his left arm pass by. From his despondent shuffle and stooped shoulders, we knew he was not a German. Thinking that he was a member of some Polish railroad militia, I ran after him and asked, "Can you tell me, please, if there is a train going to Cracow before midnight?"

"I wouldn't know," he said heavily. Then I perceived that he was a Jew.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I thought you were a member of the militia." In explanation I pointed to his armband.

"Haven't you heard?" he asked. "All Jews have to wear this in public."

Towards nine, numb with cold and fatigue, I resolved to inquire about trains in the stationmaster's office. A few persons who had been hovering around, not daring to approach him themselves, drew closer to listen for his reply. He condescended to tell me that a train was expected any minute now.

Two girls walked up to me and said, "We see that you speak German. We don't understand a word of it, and can't even tell what it is all about when the Germans holler at us. We are going to Cracow. Do you mind if we travel with you?"

I said I had no objections, and they promptly fetched their bundles—a dilapidated suitcase, tied together with a cord, and a gunny sack. They looked tired and cold. Their clothes, rumpled and worn, were, like mine, intended for a different season of the year. Later an elderly man came up with the same request. These three companions had a blind faith in my ability to escort them safely to Cracow.

By the time the train pulled in, our legs were so stiff with cold that we could hardly clamber into the dark coach, which was filled to capacity. Over feet, knees, and lumpy baggage, we wormed our way in. The coach, though unheated, seemed wonderfully warm after the icy gale of the platform. It was past midnight when we finally reached Cracow. In the dimly lit station I said goodbye to our temporary companions. When they had left us, Lola mentioned that the girls looked to her like prostitutes. I really didn't care. All I cared about was that they were Poles and needed help.

Ir had gone to get some train information. He came back with permits enabling us to go out on the streets (it was after curfew) and said he knew of a place where we could spend the night. In a rickety droshky we rode through unlit streets and alighted in front of an old apartment house. The droshky

went off, and for a long time we stood pounding at the entrance gate. By and by we were admitted, and we walked up worn wooden stairs to a third-floor landing. My matches and candle came in handy. The janitor explained that the power plant had been damaged in the fighting, that the city was still without electricity.

After more knocking, we were ushered into a small kitchen crowded with sleeping people. Ir greeted an old Jew, who rose and silently led us to a room where Lola and I were to be accommodated on a hard and narrow green plush couch, and Ir on an armchair. We produced our bread, lard, and tea, and our host provided hot water.

For a long time Lola and I shivered with cold and talked in whispers of what we had experienced, and of what we hoped to find in Warsaw.

The next morning, after a breakfast of tea and bread, Ir went to the station, and Lola and I took a stroll. Cracow presented a depressing picture. The inhabitants shuffled by, red-eyed and pale. All Jews were tagged with white arm bands. Germans in resplendent uniforms swaggered around talking and laughing loudly. German inscriptions had replaced the Polish names for streets, squares, businesses, and institutions. Sick at heart, frightened, and bewildered, we crept back to our quarters to await the return of Ir.

He informed us that the next train for Warsaw would leave around eleven at night, but that, on account of curfew, we would have to be at the station by nine. For supper we cooked some of the spaghetti I had brought, with a piece of smoked meat that Lola produced from her suitcase.

The station was a mass of milling people—some struggling to get back to their homes; others in search of lost families; all kinds of riffraff raked up by the war, smugglers of food and whisky, men with faces to scare the boldest; and Germans, Germans, Germans, everywhere. As no waiting rooms were available for Poles, the corridors and main halls were thronged with people walking, standing, sitting, and lying down. Weaving our way among suitcases, sacks, bundles, and boxes, and

among sleepers curled up on newspapers on the marble floors, we tried to reach the platform.

The entrance was locked and guarded by soldiers. I asked a German railroad guard how we could get on the train for Warsaw. At first he shrugged his shoulders, but I managed to move him by my entreaties. He told us that the train would arrive already filled to capacity, and that no one would be allowed to get on at Cracow. Lola and I began to cry, which made no impression on him. However, when Ir pressed some money in his hand, he cast a cautious glance around and whispered that he would show us a way through an unguarded gate but that it was up to us not to get caught. He led us to a service entrance, and there hastily pushed us out on a barely lighted platform.

Half an hour later the train drew up. A crowd of smugglers, with their cans of whisky and methylated alcohol, had also found their way to our platform. In the stampede that followed the stopping of the train, I was separated from Lola and Ir. Stumbling under the weight of my duffel bag and Gladstone, I ran towards an open door, but at the steps I stopped in despair. The interior of the coach seemed a tangled mass of human limbs. It would be impossible to force my way into the car. Suddenly strong hands reached down from above, grabbed me roughly by the shoulders, and pulled me and my bags in.

I recognized one of the alcohol smugglers, who only a little while ago had seemed crude and repulsive. My rescuer kicked and pushed vigorously and managed to shove me farther down the corridor. Others had been less fortunate than I. Outside I heard people struggling and fighting, cursing and moaning, until the doors were slammed to and the train was in motion.

"Lola, Lola," I called into the darkness.

Her voice answered surprisingly near.

"Lola," I said, "could I put my bag down where you are?"

She laughed sardonically. "I am standing with both my suitcases in my arms."

My position was even worse. One of my feet, it is true, was firmly planted on the floor, but the other foot was high in the

air, propped against what was presumably somebody's back. I could feel a head pushing against my left hip. My right elbow and Gladstone bag were resting on an invisible shoulder. A pleasant masculine voice spoke to my left.

"Madam, do you mind if I rest this on your head?"

Not knowing what "this" was, I felt alarmed.

"They are carnations and orchids," continued the voice. "Not heavy at all, and I am so afraid they will get crushed. If I can get them safely to Lodz, I can sell them to the German bitches there and make enough to live on, with my family, for two weeks."

I could only agree to his request, and a large, oblong cardboard box was deposited on my spinning head. It was, in fact, very light and gave forth a heavenly fragrance that made the coach, which was saturated with the odors of perspiration, stale food, and unwashed bodies, endurable.

Once in a while someone struck a match to see the time. The brief flame would illumine piles of luggage, clusters of bodies, and weary, tragic faces.

A commotion started down the corridor. Someone who was drunk was shouting curses and abuse at the Germans. Someone else tried to silence the raucous voice. A fight broke out. We could hear blows, the clash of tin, the splintering of glass. Then the air reeked with alcohol.

"For heaven's sake," screamed a woman. "Don't anyone dare light a match, or we will all go up in flames! I am standing ankle deep in alcohol!" The fluid seeped along the floor until it reached the place where I stood.

Despite my galoshes, the biting cold crept up my one standing leg. I attempted to shift my position, but every time curses followed. I finally managed to put my right foot on somebody's toes, and by little kicks and jabs cleared enough space for the left foot.

My back was to the door of a compartment, which we had assumed was jammed with passengers. Suddenly a flashlight gleamed within, long enough for us to see that only six people

sat comfortably inside with their baggage shelves half empty. This raised a storm of indignation.

"The bastards, riding like kings while we are being crushed to death out here!"

Fists pounded on the glass panes of the door.

"Open up! Let us in!"

Derisive laughter answered. Somebody pulled at the door handle, but it was latched. I squirmed around and pleaded with those inside, "Do take my duffel bag, please!"

A quavering old voice begged, "Please take my grandchild! She is a baby, and so tired. Put her in the rack, where she can sleep."

A cackle was the reply. The crowd in the corridor raved, but overcome by fatigue it finally quieted down. Towards three in the morning, bodies had reshuffled themselves slightly. At last I could put my bags on the floor. I slumped down on them, stupid with exhaustion. The man with the flowers and two others crouched with their backs against the door of the unsocial passengers' compartment.

A new argument woke me. One of the passengers in the half-empty compartment was rattling the door handle in an attempt to dislodge the leaners, and saying, "Let me out!"

"No, sir, you wouldn't let us in, now we won't let you out."

"But I've got to get out," pleaded the man.

"Just stay where you are."

"*Psia krew!*" The man was getting frantic. "I must go to the toilet."

Uproarious laughter greeted this confession, and no one budged. The man within raged. "I'll report you. I'll tell the Germans."

More laughter and a hail of ribald jokes answered him.

The train jogged along, sometimes stopping, sometimes backing up. Every minute increased the torture of cold and numb limbs. I was nauseated by the mixed odor of alcohol fumes and orchids, and dizzy from hunger. In the bluish light of dawn, I saw Lola's face, drawn and sickly. Her husband, his eyes deep-sunk, looked like one dead. The old woman with her

grandchild in her arms was dozing, with tears streaming down her pasty face into her half-open, toothless mouth. The man with the flowers was wide awake. Although dressed as a peasant, he had the face of an intellectual.

By daylight we disentangled ourselves, and stacked our baggage in a more convenient way. An elderly man stuck his head out of a compartment. He said to me, "You look tired. Maybe we can find a place for you in our compartment."

Pushing and wriggling, I slowly made my way to him. In this compartment every seat was taken. Two children were sleeping in the racks, another peeped from under the bench behind his mother's legs. I wedged myself in between the old gentleman who had spoken to me and a pretty but haggard girl. I sat down as best I could, and with the old gentleman's shoulder as a pillow, went to sleep. After a while he woke me and asked if I had a ticket. I said I was traveling as a refugee on a free permit.

"That's bad." The others spoke up too. "In this district the authorities do not respect those refugee passes any more. While you were asleep the train stopped at one of the stations, and several passengers with such permits were thrown off the train."

My heart started to pound. Just then, the train stopped again, and a fat German, in a navy blue uniform with brass buttons, barged in. Evidently he found someone right away who did not have a ticket, for we heard his voice high and shrill above the noises of the crowd. A sudden hush fell, and we could hear what he was saying: "*Raus, raus, du verfluchte Pollacke.*" ("Get out, you damn Pole.")

I began to tremble. All were anxious to help me. The old gentleman put his hand over mine and said, "Don't be frightened. When the conductor comes, I will show him my ticket. Then one of the other gentlemen will draw his attention to himself. Meanwhile I will slip you my ticket. You can show it to him, saying that he had already checked it."

But I was shaking so obviously that my very state would give me away. The pretty girl advised me to put my head in

her lap and pretend to be asleep. I did as she suggested, and the German flung open the door.

"*Fahrkarten!*" he demanded. Then noticing my reclining figure, he added, "What's this?"

"She is sick. Sick at the stomach," said the girl.

After that the scene rehearsed by the old gentleman was enacted without a hitch. We had two more such scares. Lola and Ir were in a different part of the coach, and I do not know how they escaped.

Ever since daybreak I had been looking out of the window. Again and again we passed burned-down cottages and shelled villages. Wrecked trains were innumerable. The tracks and ditches were littered with charred and distorted remains of locomotives and coaches. On several a smoke-smudged red cross still showed.

The train stopped about noon at the new Warsaw station. We scrambled out and looked around at the same chaos of milling crowds as in Cracow, at large heaps of debris and broken glass hastily scraped together, at twisted girders stretching out their menacing arms. I couldn't recognize the station, which only recently had been a fine example of modern architecture.

Out on the street I tried to find my bearings. Jerusalem Avenue—formerly so familiar to me—was unrecognizable. Where the old station had been there was only rubble. Jagged ruins loomed in every direction and threatened passers-by with crumbling walls and falling bricks. Streetcars, automobiles, and busses had disappeared. A few dilapidated droshkies standing in front of the station were promptly taken by German officers. A number of pushcarts were parked across the street, and towards these Ir steered us.

After some haggling our luggage was heaped on a little cart, and we set off towards Marszalkowska Street, picking our way over heaps of brick and broken glass. I stumbled over little mounds of clay where flower beds had formerly lined the pavement. It wasn't until my coat caught on two rough sticks tied crosswise together and jabbed into the clay, that I realized

the mounds were graves. Gaither might be lying under one of them! I began to run.

At the corner of Mokotowska Street I stopped. What would be left of our home? I pressed my hands to my eyes, not daring to look at the Methodist Building.

"But it is all right," said Ir. "It is standing."

I lifted my head, and there stood our building, scarred and battered but incredibly solid in the midst of destruction.

I flew up five flights of stairs and pounded on our apartment door. Almost instantly it opened. I started at the sight of the sunken-eyed, wasted man who stood in the doorway. Then I pitched forward, straight into the arms of Gaither. The next hours were a confusion of greetings, questions, and tears.

In the afternoon Christine came in. She was a mere shadow of herself, reduced to skin and bones. Her black eyes were enormous in her thin face. Sobbing, we clung to each other without speaking.

Christine, Lydia and Michael, Jan—one of our young preachers—and a few people whom I had not met before, occupied every available room.

The wall over Mimi's bed had been sprayed with machine-gun bullets. The living room was pock-marked with lead, one piece having gone through the blue love seat, where before the war, on quiet evenings, I had sat knitting while Gaither read aloud. Gaither's office had suffered the most. I dug a piece of shrapnel out of the wall.

Many of our relatives and friends had been killed, others could not be located. I asked Christine about Taddeus Goscicki. She took me to the window, pointed towards the Square of the Saviour, and said, "There he is."

It was after curfew, and the streets and the square were deserted save for two German sentries pacing the sidewalks. I thought she had misunderstood me, but she added, "Down there, second to the left."

"Dead?"

"Yes."

I tried to connect a living man with the little yellow mound below.

I wandered around the desolate city. Great sections of the very center were unrecognizable. Many streets had ceased to exist. The Street of the Holy Cross—a colorful warren of little shops full of junk and priceless antiques—was nothing but a double row of broken walls and jagged pits. On Elektoralna Street was the gutted shell of the Hospital of the Holy Ghost, where three hundred patients had burned to death. From many of the ruins a sweetish odor of decomposing flesh floated up, and the whole city still smelled of smoke and soot. A block away from us thirty-four people had been killed in one house. Across the pavement from this house, a child's bed, strangely twisted, still lay in the debris. In its broken springs there nestled a potted plant.

Another bombed building up the street had an almost intact front, but behind this wall and its wrought-iron entrance gate nothing remained but a heap of charred bricks. As I was passing, a man came up and rang for the janitor. He was undoubtedly a returning refugee.

I pointed to the empty windows and said, "There is no one there. Look!" Without a word, he slumped on the doorstep, hiding his face in his hands.

Mr. Jesakow, a Baptist pastor, on returning to the city, could find neither his house nor the street on which he had lived.

Which was the most horrible—the ruins, the graves, or the new life already teeming over the remains of the old? The streets were thronged with red-eyed, ghostlike people hurrying in search of food and clothing. Stores were either empty or closed, but Christians and Jews alike swarmed on the streets with open suitcases bulging with wares or with merchandise on their arms. Stockings, shoes, fur coats, sewing supplies, wool yarn, bolts of dress material, rolls of leather, and bales of pressed tobacco leaves could be bought on the streets between the Square of the Saviour and the Iron Gate—if one had the money. Money, however, was scarce.

I had been in Warsaw a week when Natalie announced Helga Schade and her brother Kurt. Helga had revealed no intentions of coming to Warsaw when I had last seen her in Bory. I was surprised that Kurt, a reserve officer of the Polish Army and employed in the foreign office, had not fled to join the Allies. At first, I didn't notice that I did most of the talking. But I became conscious that both of them, when I mentioned bombings and destruction, executions and arrests, remained silent.

"What I can't understand," I said, "is the shortsightedness of the Germans. Don't they realize that with kindness and justice they might make friends of conquered peoples?"

These words dropped into a well of silence. Helga, her back very straight, was attentively contemplating her nails. Kurt, his hands in his pockets, was balancing on his toes. Red in the face, he puffed out his cheeks and pompously declared, "We Germans do not need friends."

I stared at them. In all the years we had played together as children—and in the years of our youth and adulthood—I had always thought of them as Poles.

Our maid Natalie, though still faithful, was also pro-German. This was a surprise to me. I knew that her people were German, but because she was born and reared in Poland, I had never considered her to be anything but Polish. Moreover, Christine told me that throughout the siege Natalie had shown strong anti-German feeling, had given proof of devotion, and had guarded our possessions unmindful of her own safety. But soon after my homecoming she came to me in tears, stood searching for words, and finally blurted out, "I will have to leave you."

"But why?"

"They told me at the *Volksdeutcher Verein* that I could not work for Poles. You see, it does not befit a German to be serving. They are giving me work in an armaments factory."

Of her own will, she stayed until another maid was found. My experience with her was more fortunate than Aunt Genia's with her housekeeper, who, after sixteen years of service,

suddenly revealed herself a German, blackmailed my aunt, submitted her to humiliations, and finally left taking the family silver with her.

Life in Warsaw was bewildering. The electric plant was beginning to function again, but gas was unavailable and other fuel almost nonexistent, so that a hot meal was a problem. We could not replace our shattered windows because glass was scarce. The streets, with their crumbling walls, were a menace to pedestrians. The ruins of buildings were being torn down or dynamited. Streets were being cleared by forced labor.

Every time I walked over one of those graceful, starlike etchings that machine-gun fire had made on the pavements, I couldn't help thinking of the blood that must have been there before the rains washed it off. Churches, houses, and even ruins were plastered with black-bordered obituaries.

The entire Polish press had been suppressed. The Germans had begun to publish the Warsaw *Courier*, a propaganda daily newspaper. The Poles looked on it with revulsion, but bought it because the last pages carried innumerable personal advertisements such as, "Whoever knows of the whereabouts of my daughter, Mary, aged 3, lost on highway between Lublin and Chelm on September 7, during an air raid, is asked to notify the mother at the following address . . ."; or "John Fura begs information about his 80-year-old mother, Ann Fura, last seen in the woods near Pinsk."

Several times I went with Gaither to the Red Cross headquarters. The entrance, the halls, and even the outside walls were a flutter with slips of paper bearing information or inquiries about missing persons. A silent crowd always pressed and strained to read them. Occasionally a cry broke out from one who had found news.

The year before there had been a fad for pointed hoods among Warsaw's fashionable women—charming and frivolous hoods of fur, satin, or velvet, framing lovely faces. Now they emphasized red-rimmed eyes circled with black shadows, bitter and colorless mouths, faces stripped of youth and gaiety.

Our only means of conveyance was the open wagons which peasants had brought to Warsaw. The horses were very lean. The wagon seats were mere planks, strapped to the sides. The drivers carried long poles with a board at the end, on which the route of the vehicle was marked in clumsy letters. On rainy and snowy days, I would reach my destination stiff, cold, and soaked.

The course of the first trolley car, after the tracks had been repaired, was some two miles from Union Square up Marszałkowska Street to the Saxon Gardens. On my first streetcar ride, I met Mr. Braun. We got off at the same stop, opposite the wrecked building of the Polish Travel Bureau. I looked at the ruins and exclaimed, "Dreadful! How could they?"

Mr. Braun drew himself up proudly and declared, "Our Luftwaffe has wonderful marksmen. The Poles were criminal fools trying to defend themselves." As in the case of Kurt, I had not known that he was a German.

After Gaither had got a new passport at the consulate, we decided to go to Bory, where he could better be restored to health. Trains were running more frequently. It was December 6 when we set out. I felt delightfully warm at first, in my fur coat and woolen dress, but even this clothing proved inadequate against the icy drafts of the station platform.

The movements of hordes of people had not ceased. Thousands pressed around us, all waiting for a train whose day and hour no one knew. After we had waited ten hours, a train drew up. Ghastly scenes followed. Frantic crowds rushed at the doors and windows of the coaches. Women and children were knocked down. Men fought and struggled savagely. It is not clear to me how we finally found ourselves in a third-class compartment. In spite of the cold, we were drenched with perspiration. Gaither startled me by his rough expressions, which he had evidently learned in his recent life on the roads and in prisoner-of-war camps.

I found a comfortable seat on my duffel bag, between the legs of another passenger. Gaither was perched on our suitcases in the aisle. Several times rumors swept through the

train that it would be reserved for German troops. Once a German official, very important and red in face, walked along outside the train, roaring "*Alle raus!*" ("All out!") With a doggedness born of despair, no one stirred. After several of these alarms, the train finally puffed out of the station. No one was certain where it was going.

Our last meal had been hard bread and lard eaten at the Warsaw station, and we felt very hungry. I produced a box of matches and a candle, and by its light I took out of my Gladstone bag some black rye bread, a little jar of lard, and a jar of beet marmalade (a war novelty which had made its appearance in our daily menu). Gaither dropped his slice of bread on the extremely dirty floor of our compartment. He picked it up and, without even brushing it off, proceeded to eat it. This, from the fastidious Gaither, was staggering. When I drew his attention to what he was doing, he shrugged his shoulders and answered, "What of it? I have eaten worse."

Towards midnight we drew into the station of Zabkowice Junction. There we were ordered to change trains. The night air was icy. There was no snow, but the frozen ground rang under our steps. Our train disgorged its passengers, then disappeared into the night. As no other train was visible, we looked for a sheltered spot when someone said the waiting room was open to all. It consisted of one large room, without furniture save for two long deal tables against one wall. I made a beeline for a table and sat down on the last available bit of space. Gaither put our baggage near me on the floor and seated himself on it. A kerosene lamp shed its yellow light on us.

New arrivals opened the door from time to time, recoiled at the sight of the overcrowded room, then forced their way in. Gaither, with his elbows on his knees, dozed off. I was too uncomfortable to sleep. In a corner a family—grandmother, mother, and three children—were sleeping on a blanket on the floor. The smallest child, maybe two years old, woke up now and then with a scream. The mother explained that he had done it ever since the bombings. A man and his wife, both

looking sick, were huddled together on an overstuffed suitcase. The crowd was silent and motionless. A pale Jewish girl was leaning against the wall. When she saw me looking at her, she edged closer, and we held a whispered conversation. She told me of her parents: they were massacred when the Germans entered the city of Lodz. Her father had been clubbed to death with the butt of a gun by a young Brown Shirt trooper, and, with a rope tied to his ankles, had been dragged from their fourth-story apartment down to the yard, where he was left exposed to public view for several days. The girl kept repeating dully, "His head went bump, bump, bump down the steps—"

With a blast of cold air, the back door opened and two men came in, carrying a large bag. A wave of fear seemed to radiate from them. Gaither had awakened and he made his way to the newcomers and exchanged a few words with them. Then Gaither brought them over to me. They were Jews. The younger one had a fine face which, even in this room of sick and wretched people, was startling in its pallor. Gaither said of him, "He speaks only German. Ask him what is wrong."

The stranger told us that he had been a physician near Breslau, that he had been married and well-to-do. A year ago his wife, a German, had divorced him under the new racial law and left, taking their only child with her. Immediately afterwards he had been arrested. We didn't ask whether he had been released or had escaped from prison. We saw that his experiences had left him a physical and nervous wreck. When he told us they were going to Cracow, where they hoped to find some friends, we suggested that they accompany us, since it was on our route. They settled themselves on the floor, as close to us as possible, as if afraid of losing us.

Around two in the morning the main door flew open with a bang, and a black-shirted S.S. guard strode in, kicking sleepers aside. He carried a gun in his left hand and a cowhide whip in his right. He stood in the middle of the room, peering around. Then he used his whip to prod a young Jew sitting

on the floor and made him stand up. He picked out two more men, and jerked his thumb towards the door. The three men and the German disappeared into the darkness. After a long period the German returned and repeated his scrutiny. A few more Jews were picked out, and they also, pale and trembling, were swallowed up by the night. The German reappeared. This time he came closer. Arms akimbo, legs spread wide apart, he searched. My heart beat furiously. I saw the inevitable coming. Suddenly the German's hand, with the whip, shot out, pointing to a man in a workman's cap sitting a few yards from me.

"*Jude?*" he barked.

The man, terrified, shook his head.

"No? We shall see! Papers!"

In the light of the smoking lamp, he thumbed through the documents, then tossed them back to the owner. "All right," he said.

Coming closer and closer, he repeated his question, "*Jude? Jude? Jude?*" Finally he stood pointing at Gaither. I knew that the next victim would be the Jewish doctor.

"Jew?" His voice rang out like a pistol shot.

As if jerked by an electric current, my right hand shot out, the forefinger pointing at the Black Shirt.

"*Und Sie?*" ("And you?") I did not recognize my own voice.

He turned on me viciously and stared. Somewhere in the recesses of my mind curiosity stirred. Would he use his gun, or would he simply slash me across the face with his whip? After a few seconds of frozen silence—it seemed like hours—he pivoted on his heels, and without a word strode out. He did not come back.

At six in the morning our train finally appeared. The waiting room boiled up like a caldron. Gaither and I found that we were now shepherding a large group of people: the Jewish doctor and his companion; the pale Jewish girl with whom I had talked; an old lady, white and frail, who, having lost most of her family in the battle of Warsaw, had set out to find her

last son, reported wounded somewhere near Rzeszow; a young woman with a baby in her arms.

The door to the station platform was guarded by two German soldiers, who looked over every passenger's documents. The Jewish doctor, when he saw this, recoiled in fear.

"They won't let us through," he whispered hoarsely. "It's no use trying."

The engine was puffing, people were swarming into the coaches, and time was fleeing. But we felt we could not abandon the doctor and his companion. Gaither had a brilliant idea. First he shoved me through the gate, having shown our papers to the sentries. Then he went back into the waiting room, grabbed the doctor's bag, and with the two men disappeared through the opposite entrance, which led out on the station square. Shortly afterwards he reappeared at my side, accompanied by his wards. Under cover of darkness they had crawled through a hole in the fence. Somehow we managed to hoist our possessions and all companions aboard before the train was set in motion.

We reached Cracow early in the afternoon, and as there were no available trains before the next day we had to spend the night there. At the gate, Gaither, utterly weary, fumbled for our tickets, which had got stuck in his wallet. This small delay infuriated the German ticket collector, and he abused us in obscene terms, shook his fist in Gaither's face, and fairly spat with fury. I was indignant and as soon as we had passed the gate inquired where to make a complaint. I asked a Pole. "My dear lady," he said with heavy irony, "you must have just dropped from the moon if you want to make a complaint against a German."

But in my quest for justice I found my way to the information office. A uniformed official answered my question in perfect Polish. He wrote down my name and address.

"*Volksdeutsche?*" he queried.

"No, a Pole."

His eyebrows shot up. His voice became harsh. "And you wish to make a complaint against a German?"

"The man was abusive without reason. He must have been drunk," I explained.

The veins on his forehead swelled, and his florid face turned purple as he jumped up from behind the desk.

"You Polish swine! Coming here to complain! The man was too kind to you if he only cursed you. He should have kicked you. It's a scandal that even a single Pole should be still alive. You should have been exterminated with poison gas, like rats. But what is delayed is not lost. The Fuehrer has promised that he will soon rid us of Jewish and Polish vermin."

This sounded by now fairly familiar, yet I couldn't help asking, "But why do you hate us so?"

"Because you are our greatest enemies. You have forced us into this war. You have murdered thousands of our people."

"It's a pity that we didn't get you also," I said sweetly.

His eyes bulged, his mouth opened, his trembling fists were raised over his head. But he did nothing. My insolence had petrified him. With a malicious smile I made my way to the door and disappeared before he had a chance to break either his pose or my bones.

We got into a droshky and told the driver to take us to the Pod Roza Hotel, at which we had spent several days only a few months ago. A frightened and shrunken manager whispered to us that the whole building had been taken over by the Germans. In spite of the change in our appearance, he recognized us, but said he could do nothing for us. "Don't you know," he said, "that there are no hotels for us Poles? You'll have to ask friends to put you up."

"But we are so tired," I wailed, "and we have no friends in the city."

"You are an American," he exclaimed, turning to Gaither.

"Yes, and my wife also."

"That's fine. Even if they catch you, they won't dare do anything. Go to this address." He scribbled something on a slip of paper.

"Let your husband do the talking, madam," he said. "Your Polish is too good. Don't say much, just show your passports."

We soon found ourselves in a modest little room, which was cold and almost bare. To slip between clean sheets was wonderful.

Gaither woke me shortly after four the next morning. The hotel clerk had advised us to take the southern route to Bory and told us that the train for Zielona would leave around five. We drove to the station in complete darkness. No one could tell us when we would reach Bory. Even at this hour of the morning we found crowds on the platform. We stormed the train with thousands of others. Bruised and battered, we found places in a narrow compartment. Thirteen people were compressed into a space intended for eight. We couldn't distinguish faces, but from the cheesy smell of their clothes we guessed that our fellow travelers were dairy farmers who brought in milk every morning from the country.

I managed to get at our food. Breakfast consisted of the usual slice of bread with beet jam. Others followed our example. We all chewed our food in silence, with reverence and concentration.

The peasant women, who at first had ogled my city clothes with the customary contempt, slowly relaxed their hostility. A buxom woman dressed in a sheepskin coat turned to me a face as glowing as the red kerchief tied over her head. First timidly, then with increasing vehemence, she began to talk. Her brother had been killed by the Germans in his own home when they found an old, forgotten shotgun in a closet. Others joined the conversation. An old peasant woman said, "We thought at first, one government gone, another one here, and we didn't care. But we have learned our lesson. Things were not always perfect before the war, and there was a lot of grumbling, but these damned Germans are teaching us fast what we've lost."

A mountaineer from Zakopane, as we could tell by his dress, said, "They won't be here forever. We'll show them when ours come back."

An old man said, "You had better hold your tongues, my good people. You never know who may be listening."

From between wrinkled eyelids, he slid a suspicious look around the compartment. A hush fell over us and conversations were not resumed. We were learning to hold our tongues.

At Zielona, where we arrived at eight in the morning, we had to walk to another train. It was about half a mile, and we had to carry our baggage. From there our train crept across the mountains to Opatkow, where we changed again. We arrived in New Market around one, and had to wait five hours for the next train to Bory.

The restaurant where we had hoped to get some warm food was filled with German soldiers. We preferred not to remain in their company. I proposed to Gaither that we look up the Bolkos and then find another restaurant. We checked our baggage, vaguely conscious that something was amiss. The station was deserted, save for German soldiers and a few scared porters. We stepped out of the building—and stopped. Directly facing us was a machine gun. The building was encircled by storm troopers in helmets, with guns in their hands, who looked as if they were ready to shoot at the drop of a hat. Other machine guns, placed at various points of the station square, barred the streets that led into it. A patrol stepped up threateningly. Guns were pointed straight at us. A short, thickset fellow, who looked as if he had no forehead under his steel helmet, croaked out, "*Ausweis!*"

I was frightened and did not understand at once. With a menacing air he stepped closer and shouted his order again.

"Quick, Gaither, the passports."

The German snatched them out of his hand. When he saw the American eagle he lowered his gun, and his face broke into a grimace no doubt meant as a friendly smile. He beamed. "How did you get here?"

I explained that we had just come on the train.

"And where are you going?"

"We would like to spend the time until the next train in town, with some friends."

"A bad day for calling," he said. "The town is under martial law, but American citizens may go about freely. Just carry

your passports in your hands where they can be seen, so you don't get shot. And don't forget that curfew starts at five."

We walked down Station Street. Everywhere were soldiers, all in full battle outfit. In front of many houses, army trucks were stationed. Germans were carrying out furniture, bags of flour, and other bundles, piling them into the cars.

When we reached Zamoyski Street, my heart stood still. I would have fallen if Gaither had not caught me. In the side street a group of men—their hands tied behind them—were being lined up against a wall. Facing them stood a line of German soldiers with rifles in their hands.

When we arrived at the Bolkos, Mrs. Bolkowa and her daughter Lila were sobbing.

"For God's sake, what is going on here?" we asked.

"A punitive expedition has been here since yesterday."

The term was new to us, but we were enlightened. A special S.S. detachment trained in terrorist methods had swept down on the little town. Looting, arrests, torture, executions, followed. Many whom we knew had been seized. The Bolkos were awaiting their turn with dread. They expected at any moment to be dragged out of their home and stood up against the nearest wall like thousands of others.

At four we made our way back to the station through deserted streets. The little houses—with all curtains drawn and shutters closed—looked as if they were crouching low in terror. Occasionally a face would peer out from behind curtains.

On the train we met our first deportee. He was a man about thirty-five years old. Throwing all caution to the winds, he told us, in a voice full of hatred and despair, that several sections of Poznan had been entirely cleared of Poles, and that Hitler had announced the western sections of Poland would be Germanized. "And I was among the first to be deported."

"But what about property? How are people going to move their furniture, bedding, clothes? And what about quarters for the deported people?"

"Look, this is what I was allowed to take." He picked up a

shabby leather brief case, snapped it open, and displayed one crumpled shirt, one pair of socks, one suit of underwear. "I had a store, and this is what I have left."

He pulled out his wallet and showed a ten-zloty bill. "That's all anyone is allowed to take with him. They even took my wedding ring."

Under the spell of this new tragedy, we got off the train at Bory.

December 1939 and January 1940

by GAITHER

BACK in Warsaw after a brief rest in Bory, I turned my attention first to the repairs of the Methodist Building. The shattered glass roof had to be replaced. Glass, because of its scarcity, was out of the question, and a substitute cheap yet strong enough for the purpose had to be found. Window frames and panes had to be put in, and the gaping holes made by artillery shells filled in.

Ruth Lawrence, Ellen Newby, and I talked over the possibility of reopening our English Language College. Ruth and Ellen were enthusiastic and pointed out that the classrooms were not greatly damaged and could easily be repaired and that most of our former teachers were still available. Ruth visited the German administrative headquarters, located in the beautiful Palais Brühl, the former Polish Foreign Ministry, and wangled from the head of the Department of Education a written permission to reopen. When this news spread among our former students, 126 immediately applied for registration and even paid their fee.

One day two agents of the Gestapo came and asked for Ruth. While they were waiting for her in the office, she came

to ask me to go in with her. They told us that our school would have to be closed.

"But the Department of Education has given us permission to teach!" Ruth explained. She produced the official document.

One of them—a dumpy chap with beady eyes—waved it aside disdainfully. "That doesn't count," he said. "We decide in these matters. I tell you that French and English cannot be taught in Warsaw. If you wish, you may teach German, Italian, or Spanish. If you don't comply with our orders, we will seal your premises and arrest you."

Shortly after the first visit they reappeared—this time to put all our English and French books, including the dictionaries and hymn books, into a storage room and seal the room.

But the schoolrooms did not stay empty. With refugees and deportees streaming into Warsaw, we turned the rooms into a hostel for the homeless.

Christmas came. Michael and Lydia insisted on observing *Wigilja*, the traditional Christmas Eve supper. The meal had shrunk from its customary twelve courses—one for each month of the year—to a bowl of *barszcz* (beet soup) and *pierogi* (potato dumplings). But there was a handful of fresh hay under the white tablecloth to remind us of the manger, and the ruby-clear soup had the traditional flavor. Thinking hopefully of the coming spring and the Allied offensive it would bring, we kissed one another on the cheek, and expressed our wishes that next year Christmas would find all families reunited and the world at peace.

Christmas Day passed sadly. We heard of many who had been arrested and executed shortly before the holidays. Such news usually took several days to leak out, and if the Germans calculated it to come as a Christmas present, they had timed their work well.

On December 27, early in the morning while I was shaving, Janka, our new maid, knocked on the door to tell me that there was a man in my study who wanted to see me urgently. The man waiting for me was Mr. Puchalski, a member of our

Warsaw congregation. His clothes were covered with mud, and he was frightened.

"I have slept in the woods," he said. "I can't go home. You must help me. Where can I hide?"

I told him he could stay with us until it was safe for him to go back. Then two other church members came in. I knew that all three lived in Wawer, a suburban settlement. They gave an account of the massacre there the previous night.

Later I heard in full how, in a tavern, two fugitive felons, thinking they were being pursued, had fired at some German soldiers and had killed two. Within a few hours, a detachment of *Landesschutzen* (home defense troops) had gone from house to house, dragging peaceful citizens—unaware of what had happened—out of their beds. Arrests were made at the same time in Anin, Marysinek, and Zastow. The train carrying men from Otwock to work in Warsaw was stopped, and all the men aboard were arrested. Some two hundred in all were taken and herded into a railroad tunnel. They were kept there for several hours, in the bitter cold, with their hands raised. Many of them were in night clothes. Towards morning a group of men was led outside and machine-gunned by the headlights of the police cars—then a second group, a third, a fourth, and more. The last group, instead of being shot, was taken to where the corpses littered the frozen ground. They were made to dig graves, and then were released. During this execution many inhabitants, in fear of further reprisals, had fled from their homes and hidden in fields and woods. In the morning they had made their way to Warsaw on foot.

This was the Poles' first lesson in collective responsibility.

Our deaconess, Sister Edith, later told me that her cousin, Daniel Gering, had perished that night. The Germans asked his name. On hearing it, they said, "Isn't that a German name? Are you a German?"

"No, I am a Pole."

"But your family must have come from Germany. Say that you are a German and we'll let you go."

"I am a Pole," was his reply.

In January, Warsaw was electrified by the news that the Soviet authorities were sending a large number of Polish war prisoners back to German-occupied Poland. Representatives of the Polish Red Cross, with supplies of clothing, food, and medicine, left for the Soviet-German demarcation line on the Bug River. Many women—Mrs. Stefanowska and Mrs. Pajakowa among them—whose husbands were held captive in Russia, accompanied the Red Cross to await the repatriates, with poignant hope in their hearts. They waited for seven or eight weeks—living meanwhile in peasant huts under extreme hardships. But the Polish war prisoners did not arrive. No word from or about them ever came.

With a summons for me from the Gestapo there began a series of trips to their headquarters on Szucha Avenue. These visits became frequent enough in the years that followed for me to get used to them, but the first one made a deep impression on me. I took Jan, who spoke good German, as an interpreter, but he was stopped at the entrance, and I was told to go in alone.

The sergeant who interviewed me smiled dubiously when I told him I did not speak German. He pointed to a chair. I sat down facing him across a large desk. He asked a long question in German.

"I'm sorry," I said, "but I don't understand."

He asked another, shorter this time. I shook my head. Undiscouraged, he kept on asking questions, shorter and simpler every time. At last he said something that penetrated. I knew that he was asking where I was born. In answering, I articulated words distinctly and raised my voice as if I were speaking to a deaf man. For an hour and a half we conversed, I groping for words, and as time went on I understood him better and better. I do not know what my examiner was driving at. Anyway, the slowness of our progress did not discourage him or dampen his interest in my person. At last he rose, seemingly satisfied. He insisted on shaking hands with me pompously. I was fagged out.

"If they keep up this sort of thing," I thought to myself

walking home, "they won't get much information out of me, but I shall have an opportunity to learn the German language free of charge."

From the very first I knew that the Methodist Building and we, ourselves, were being watched constantly by the police, who were rather clumsy about it. One day I stepped out of the entrance of our building into the street and came face to face with the dumpy Gestapo man who had called on Ruth about our school. I caught him staring up at my windows, and it took him a little while to recover his balance when he saw that I had recognized him. He smiled pleasantly, though he looked at me slyly.

"Fancy meeting you here," he exclaimed in Polish. "How are you getting on, Pan Superintendent?"

"Thanks, pretty well," I answered curtly.

"Well, if you should ever get into trouble, call on me."

With a pat on my shoulder he sauntered off.

Agents and provocateurs hovered around us thickly, and we developed a sixth sense that warned us of their presence. Many of them spoke excellent Polish and were in mufti. One of them rang my doorbell one day. The maid was out, and I went to open. In faultless Polish he asked if I were Pastor Warfield, and said he would like to talk with me. I took him into my study, and he handed me a small card, saying, "I am working for the Gestapo."

It was the first time I had seen a Gestapo identification card. While he put it back in his pocket, I looked him over carefully. "My first real Gestapo agent," I kept thinking. "Secret state police." He was a short, medium-built fellow with bluish jowls, a low forehead, and cold, shrewd eyes. I reflected that he must have lived many years among Poles to speak the language so fluently. Here was one of those who had shared Polish life, work, and pleasures—one who had burrowed into activities, joined organizations, and learned innermost secrets—the better to betray the people who had accepted him as one of their own.

"What do you want?" I tried to keep the loathing out of my voice.

"You are the administrator of this building, I understand. I am employed on Szucha Avenue, not far from here, as you know. I want to know if you have a nice single room for me."

I told him that all rooms in the building were occupied, but that I could inquire among the people to see if someone wouldn't sublet a room. Casually I mentioned that we had hardly any fuel left and that our building was very cold. He went away after having made a rapid inspection of me, my little study, and the hall. Fearing that he would be back, I warned our tenants. They were frightened out of their wits at the prospect of having such a guest in their homes. Fortunately he never returned, and I concluded that he had wanted only to get acquainted with me and to size up my financial possibilities.

December 1939 and January 1940

by HANIA

NEVER again, I had vowed after Gaither's return from Russia, would I let myself be separated from him even for a day. But shortly before Christmas, Mother had a heart attack, and when Gaither's work recalled him to Warsaw, I remained in Bory.

One day a stranger knocked on the door and handed me a letter addressed to Father. It said, "Dear Sir: Joe sends his greetings. Kindly let me know when I can see you. I have a message for you. Edward Zielinski." The note bore a New Market address.

"Hania, you'll have to go and see him. A letter would take several days," exclaimed Mother, so excited that we feared another heart attack.

I took the early morning train. At the indicated address, a young man admitted me but looked suspicious until I told him I was Joe's sister and showed him his note to Father. He invited me into a spotless but unheated room. While we talked our breath came in little clouds from our lips.

"I have just returned from Hungary," said the young man. "Joe is working with the Polish Consulate in Budapest."

He gave an account of Joe's movements. After leaving us on the tragic morning of September 5, Joe had managed to out-walk the invading enemy forces and had got safely to Ruda. There, in the hills above the village, he came across several abandoned military trucks which were being looted by peasants. He charged at them with a dummy pistol—the only weapon he had found before leaving the house—and sent them scuttling. Then he picked out for himself a complete soldier's outfit—uniform, boots, storm helmet, hand grenade, rifle, and gun—and also some maps of the region. He marched on, heading northeast, but hadn't gone far when he came across a detachment of Polish soldiers who had been lost in the mountains. Their officer had been killed in action, and they were sitting on the grass, not knowing what to do next. They could hear sounds of battle in the distance—to the south, west, and north, and even to the east. Joe's hikes had acquainted him thoroughly with this section of the country, and he undertook to lead the soldiers to where they could join other army units. The little group wandered on and on, fighting battles, feeding on whatever could be picked up, and losing men through sickness and wounds until their number was reduced from eighty men to twelve. Joe and Edward Zielinski were among the survivors. The Germans finally captured the men near Sanok, and shipped them off to a war prisoners' camp in southern Slovakia. But Joe had watched too many Wild West films in his day to be at a loss for a plan. During a stormy, moonless November night, he, Edward, and a few others killed the sentries, cut the barbed wire, and escaped. Joe and Edward turned south, and with the help of Slovakian

peasants made their way into Hungary. Edward, after a short stay in Budapest, had returned to Poland.

The river, which seldom froze, was a solid block of ice even before Christmas, and the oldest men in the village said they did not remember such weather. Nothing could be added to our small supply of wood and coal, and there was but one thing to do. We shut off the rest of the house, and moved into two rooms on the first floor. One was to be Mother and Father's bedroom and also the dining room; the other, mine and Mimi's. The latter was large, and an additional bed could be put in for Gaither when he came back.

Our community life underwent more changes. New laws, regulations, prohibitions, and rules rained on us until we moved about as bewildered as Alice in Wonderland. The village school had been opened in November, then promptly closed again. For lack of fuel, we thought, but the *Landrat* (the district governor) in New Market enlightened us: "Poles need no education. Slaves don't have to read and write."

In neighboring towns, high schools were also opened for a short time. When the classrooms were filled, teachers and students were arrested in great numbers and taken away to prisons and concentration camps. Jews were registered and formed into labor squads. Every day they had to report for work, bringing their own tools and food. In Bory, neither seventy-six-year-old Aaron, nor Tymka's hunchbacked Josek, barely fifteen, were spared. The Gestapo made frequent raids and every time somebody would be taken—the miller's son from White Water; the dentist; Mateusz Szalas, from whom we had ordered a sack of potatoes. Szalas' wife, weeping, brought back the money I had left with him and said that "they" had taken him on the highway as he was driving to town. The horse and buggy were left standing until a neighbor brought them home.

Old Pejser beckoned to me from his doorstep one day. "They've taken my horse and all three cows," he said. "There will be no more meat. Jews are not allowed to butcher any more."

"Did they pay you anything?"

"Pay me? Yes, they did." He pointed to a dark bruise on his left cheek. He burst into tears. "Such cows. Such a beautiful horse. A man works all his life, saves his pennies, and then this."

Father thought it had been an act of willful robbery on the part of some soldiers. He went to the Kommandantur to report it. The Hauptmann looked at him coldly.

"It's the law. And you'd better stop championing the Jews. I am giving you fair warning."

Two days before Christmas the Gestapo made many arrests in the neighborhood of Bory. I was going up the valley in one of my endless, and usually fruitless, attempts to barter clothes for victuals, when a small wagon drawn by a scrawny horse passed me. The driver looked frightened. I noticed, as he slowly drove by, that he carried a load under the sacking that covered the back of the wagon, from which something dark was oozing and dripping. An armed German was following closely, and, at a short distance, two children were coming, crying loudly. The boy was about eight, the girl younger. They were not from our village. They disappeared towards New Market. The path of the wagon was marked with blood. Later we learned that the police had made a search in the home of a judge in Pilica, had found a gun, and had taken the judge, his wife, and the maid into the garden and shot them. The two children had been spared. A neighbor had been forced to take the bodies to New Market in his wagon. The terrified children had followed the wagon on foot.

The first garrison of peaceful Rhinelanders, including Wacker, Seger, and Schmidt, had been moved. The men of the new garrison indulged in frequent excesses: they drank, broke windowpanes, beat whomever they encountered, and fired at random. We were afraid to go out.

Father helped shovel snow, chop wood, keep the fire going in the tile stoves, and carry out the ashes. But Mother's health was getting worse, and she needed a lot of attention. Mimi, used to the companionship of a governess, was restless. And my

"scavenger hunts" took so much time that I finally decided on an extravagance. I arranged with Kasia, one of the peasant girls who used to work in our garden before the war, to come every day for a few hours to help with the heavier household tasks.

On Christmas Eve, our *Wigilia* consisted only of beet soup (*barszcz*) and baked potatoes. But Mimi had her tree. The decorations of former years were brought down from the attic. We pretended that pebbles wrapped in gay tissue paper were candy.

One afternoon in January I was tidying the kitchen after our meal. The sky was clear and turning pink with the sunset. It was very cold, and I put on my sheepskin coat over the sweater and shawl I was already wearing. The wind was whistling noisily, and I wasn't sure I had heard a knock on the back door—a knock so timid that I knew it couldn't be one of the German frontier guards, who, on cold days, would come in to warm themselves. I thought it might be one of the poorer peasants who, with increasing frequency, dropped in to beg for food.

On the doorstep was a tall young stranger. His face was blue, and he was shivering. I invited him into the kitchen. He began, "I have been told that a professor lives here. They say he is a kind man—a good Pole."

"No professor lives here," I said, "but we are Poles."

"Could I speak with the man of the house?"

"Wait here, please."

I went into Father and Mother's room, closing the door after me.

"Father," I said, "a young man wants to speak to you. He hasn't said who he is, but I believe he is a soldier. Something tells me he'll ask you to put him up for the night and help him get across the border. Please be careful. He may be a spy. The Germans might have sent him. For heaven's sake, don't walk into a trap."

"I'll be careful. Take him into the dining room."

The young man hung up his short leather jacket and his cap in the hall, and I showed him into my room, because the

dining room had not been heated all winter. I left him with Father. Then I quickly returned to the hall and emptied all his coat pockets. There was a crust of bread wrapped in a piece of newspaper, a cigarette case with one cigarette in it, a handkerchief, a pocket knife, and some documents. I spread the documents out rapidly on the window sill and read: "Leon Aniskowski, born in Starogard, March 20, 1918." A pilot's license, issued shortly before the outbreak of war by one of our junior military schools, a birth certificate, and other papers were all in the same name. Fairly satisfied that the documents were authentic, I put all the things back where I had found them, and returned to the kitchen. Just then Father stuck his head through the door to say, "Can you fix up something hot to eat? The boy is cold, and I believe he hasn't had food for days. You are right, he is an army man. He's got to get out of the country. They are on his trail."

I lit a fire under the kitchen stove, heated up leftovers, and took a tray into my room. Our guest jumped to his feet and bowed.

"Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Leon Aniskowski, and I am a flier." He took a step towards the door. "But let me get my documents. Nowadays it's only fair to identify oneself before accepting hospitality."

I blushed and smiled. "Please don't trouble yourself. I have been through your pockets, and I have seen all your papers."

Father, very red, stood looking at me, appalled at this outrage against decency.

We left the young man to his meal and went to Mother to tell her about our guest. Not giving Father a chance to speak, fearful that he would let himself be carried away by kind-heartedness, I spoke quickly. "Of course, we can't keep him here. His papers seem all right, but how can we tell he isn't a stool pigeon? Besides, he came in broad daylight, and someone might have seen him coming up the hill. We'll have to tell him to go on his way."

Mother sighed and said, "I guess you are right. It means death to all of us if it is a trap."

Father remonstrated. "We can't let him go. It's better that we should be executed than to send out an innocent boy to be caught by the first sentry he meets."

"But how can we tell whether he is innocent?" I asked, half yielding.

"Bring him in here," said Mother. "I'd like to have a look at him."

As the flier bent over Mother's hand to kiss it, she looked intently at his face. He straightened up, but she did not let go of his hand. Turning towards me and Father, she said, with tears in her eyes, "He looks like Joe. Have you noticed? His eyes—and his hair, too. Hania, go fix one of the upstairs rooms."

Rebellious and unconvinced, I left Mother and Father talking to the stranger.

The second floor of the house, which we hadn't even entered for several months, was ice-cold. The frozen floor boards creaked under my steps. I went into the room directly above mine and Mimi's, thinking that it would be easier to heat than the others. Although it gained some warmth from our ceiling, it was so cold that I shivered in spite of my shawl, sweater, and sheepskin coat. I brought up wood and made a roaring fire in the tile stove. Then I nailed a dark carriage blanket over the window, taking care that no light would show through the cracks at night. I made up the bed, fetched a candle and matches, and then went for Leon.

"He has a temperature," said Mother. "Give him some hot tea before he goes to bed. It might help his cough."

Indeed, the man looked sick. But I was still apprehensive. Upstairs, before leaving him, I said, "Listen, I have nailed this over the window. The Germans can see our house from their headquarters, and if they see a ray of light from this window, they'll be here without fail to make a search, so be careful, please. And don't try to come down unless I call you. In case you hear Germans coming into the house, don't get alarmed. Lock yourself in, go to bed, and stay there till you get a sign from me."

He thanked me, but I interrupted him brusquely. "If you are

what you say, we'll take good care of you. But if you are a provocateur, you won't get out alive. I'll slash your throat from ear to ear with the kitchen knife, so help me God."

The next day the gale and the cold increased. Leon was worse, and there was no question of letting him go. All the time he was coughing upstairs in bed, we racked our brains trying to think up means of getting him across the well-guarded border. The times when we trusted everybody seemed very far away. Kurt Werle, Mr. Braun, and a few others had taught us caution. As we sat reviewing the villagers, one by one, we stopped and said after every name, "Yes, he seems all right. But who knows if he won't give us away."

While Kasia was in the house working, we kept Leon locked in upstairs. But on the fourth day, when she did not come and he was beginning to feel better, we asked him to have lunch with us downstairs. He had hardly gone up again to his room, when two frontier guards and their officer tramped into the house. They unstrapped their skis and, puffing, rubbing their ears, and slapping their hands together, explained that they had come to get warm. The officer was Gottlieb. He put his hand on the knob of Mother and Father's door and asked perfunctorily, "Is it all right if we go in?"

"Please," I said. "Mother is worse today. If you want to rest, go into the other room."

I showed them the way through the dining room into my room. One of the men produced some tea. I went to the kitchen to put the kettle on, and then tiptoed upstairs to whisper to Leon, "Germans downstairs. Take off your shoes and get into bed. I'll let you know when they are gone."

Composing my features, I carried the glasses of tea to our unwelcome visitors. With the tray still in my hand, I suddenly froze with horror. Leon's dry cough came clearly to my ears from upstairs. But the Germans seemed not to have heard. They were helping themselves to the sugar they had brought out and unwrapping sandwiches. They sipped the hot tea and settled down comfortably. I realized that I would have to keep them talking if Leon's presence was to go undetected.

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and tree. And she was both trustworthy and cautious. While she was at work in the woodshed, making kindling, I broke in on her.

"Kasia," I said, looking at her sternly, "I'm going to tell you something. But remember, if you talk and this gets to the Germans, we're all as good as dead. And that means you too. You know what happened to the judge's maid at Pilica?"

"If you mean the young man upstairs, you needn't worry. I've known about him for several days. But it's all right; I haven't told anyone. Does he want to get across?" She waved her hand towards the hills.

I nodded. "But you see, he can't pay a guide. He has no money. Would you know of someone——?"

"Never mind the money. We've been taking them across, my brother Franek and I, just for the pleasure of helping one of our own. When do you want me to take him?"

The solution had materialized so suddenly, so simply.

"The sooner the better. The Germans may get wind of his presence any moment."

She meditated, then said, "I'll finish my work, and you tell him to get ready. I'll take him home with me, and he can spend the night in the hayloft. There is a wedding on the Slovakian side tomorrow night, a cousin of ours getting married. We have talked to the sentries and have bribed them to let some relatives through. We've promised to give them some rabbits and more money. But not until we're back from the wedding—to make sure that they don't start shooting on the border!" She laughed.

"Tell the young gentleman," she continued, "that he can join us. The Germans will think he is one of the wedding guests. On the Slovakian side, he will get handed down to the Hungarian border."

"Handed down?"

"Yes. My cousin will send him on to the next village, where friends of his will direct him further to people they know—from village to village until he reaches Hungary."

Mother told me to make a small bundle of a blanket, two

shirts, some underwear, and socks for Leon. I added bread, sugar, and two teaspoonfuls of real tea in a little paper bag. Father pressed a small sum of money in his hand. After a few words of prayer, we sadly said goodbye. I thought of Joe and the thousands of others fleeing and hiding like animals, starving and freezing, on their way to the Allied forces.

We had been right in trusting Kasia's judgment. Leon got safely across the border. Later we learned that he was in Budapest, bound for France, to which the Poles were flocking in anticipation of the approaching spring offensive.

In the richer parts of Poland, trade in food products had revived to a certain degree, and those who had the means could buy on the black market. But not so in Bory. The Germans had prohibited any food being carried from county to county, and our non-arable mountain region, with no supplies coming in, was struggling with famine. The little that was produced locally was carefully recorded by the authorities. All mills were watched by the police, and whatever grain was brought was weighed and part of it confiscated.

Not only the poor but even the richer peasants could hardly keep body and soul together. Though the zloty was still our unit of money, it was now German-issued and not worth the paper it was printed on. The farmers, when induced to part with any produce, would accept only clothing, bedding, or soap in payment.

Droves of city people, despite severe penalties, roamed the countryside daily with bundles on their backs. In a short time the more accessible settlements were cleared of food and glutted with articles of wearing apparel and household goods. (These items became even scarcer than food after the first three months of official and individual German looting.)

Father's age and asthma kept him indoors a great deal, and as the range of my forays was limited, our situation was desperate. We were relieved, therefore, when Gaither wrote that he would be with us for several weeks in February. Before his arrival we went through trunks and closets, selecting for

barter all clothes that seemed not indispensable. Stockings, blouses, skirts, and underwear went into the pile. We spent hours trying to fix a fair price on each piece. Should a pair of shoes be priced at three bushels of rye or two of wheat? A sweater at a cubic meter of potatoes? Mimi's dress at ten quarts of oats?

Gaither arrived. Though in need of rest, he set out on his trading expedition the next day. It was February 13—his birthday. Mimi had been looking forward to it—expecting somehow to be the recipient of presents on that day and not the donor. But that very morning he took the five o'clock train to the next station, intending to make his way on foot from there to a distant mountain hamlet.

It was pitch-dark and cold when I arose at four in the morning. I lit the fire in the tile stove. Then, after bundling into my sweater, shawl, and sheepskin coat, I lit the kerosene lamp—the electric plant was inactive—and went to make breakfast while Gaither dressed and shaved. He looked full of hope and optimism. He was wearing—under protest—an old fur coat of my late grandfather's, unearthed in the attic, heavy hobnailed shoes, a thick, woolen muffler, and a padded ski cap with flaps that covered his neck, ears, cheeks, and chin. In his right hand he carried a heavy stick, in his left a flashlight. We had prepared a bundle of wares for him to take along, but when he lifted it to his back it was so heavy that he staggered. Half the things had to be removed and the rest repacked into a knapsack, since this would leave both his arms free. At last he forced the door open against the wind and disappeared into the swirling blizzard.

February 1940

by GAITHER

THE deep snow and the heavy pack on my back made progress toward the station slow. From time to time I used my flashlight to keep out of the heavy drifts on both sides of the road. Lola and Ir were waiting at the station. Only Lola was to accompany me, for Ir had heard that there was a square of shoe leather to be bought in New Market, and he was going after it. The train arrived, and for forty minutes we traveled up the valley.

We got out at a tiny station—a wooden shack in a thicket of fir trees. We adjusted our packs—Lola, too, had a knapsack on her back—and struck out, following the bed of a stream towards the hamlet we had chosen as our first point of attack. The sky was graying, and it was snowing thickly. The wind struck us sharply in the face as we left the protection of the trees. We slowly plodded on, kicking through the deep snow, while the wind swirled heavy clouds of flakes around us, making it impossible to see more than two or three feet ahead. I drew the flaps of my ski cap closer over my face and looked at Lola anxiously, afraid that she would not be able to keep pace with me. She grinned back reassuringly, her jaw set with determination under the woolen scarf which she had tied over her head. The road seemed interminable, and my pack grew heavier and heavier. It was a great relief to reach the houses and to step out into the village street. We turned in at the first gate and rapped.

"May Jesus Christ be praised."

"Forever and ever, amen."

We stepped into the *izba* and took off our gloves, scarfs, and coats. Without another word, we went up to the stove to warm our hands. The whole family, on account of the storm, was at home, and we sat down with the air of expected guests and began to talk about the weather. In a little while, as we had anticipated, came the question.

"What are you doing in our village? We see you are strangers here."

The hostess, looking furtively at our knapsacks, added without waiting for our reply, "What have you got there?"

Slowly we undid our packs and spread out the contents. No sooner had I brought out the high-laced shoes than the woman pounced on them. She kicked off her moccasins. I thought of Cinderella's sisters as I saw her pulling at the shoes and pushing her feet into them. It was no use. They were too small for her. Sadly she handed them back to me. Next she speculatively fingered a sweater Lola was holding up.

"How much?"

They wanted to know the prices, willing to pay us, without much argument, in money. But when we mentioned grain and potatoes, they shook their heads. While we were showing our wares, neighbors—they had mysteriously learned of our presence—came in. But seeing that this house would yield nothing, we packed up and moved to the next house, where a large number of peasants had already assembled.

This time we undid our packs with the assurance of experts. With the grace of a mannequin, I spread a lady's blouse against myself, turning towards the women. Then I picked up a handful of Mimi's socks and dangled them alluringly. Lola, who had also brought out her wares, was talking briskly, pointing out their color, texture, and finish. Although the sweaters she had were choice, my high-laced shoes had more appeal. Every woman in the room had to try them on. The few who succeeded in getting their feet inside, paraded up and down, smiling delightedly, even though their feet were crammed in too tight. Finally a woman was found who really could wear them. I was determined to drive a sharp bargain and followed her husband to a little shed where he wanted to show me his grain. After long bickering, I took a sack I had brought with me, and we slowly poured barley into it, measuring carefully with a wooden scoop. The sack was too heavy for me to carry to the station, and the peasant agreed he

would travel by night and bring it to our home. Regretfully I left my sack with him after having tied and marked it.

We continued from home to home, although by now we were thoroughly tired of going through the same motions. Few were willing to bargain with us, but the women were curious to see all we had to offer. We were a sort of traveling sideshow in this snow-bound wilderness. Towards noon we took out our lunch and ate the thick sandwiches of black bread and cottage cheese. Then we went on with our work and succeeded in bartering clothing for three small sacks of grain, which we put in our knapsacks. Nothing else, we realized, could be squeezed out of this territory, so, slinging our packs back on our shoulders, we set out for the station.

The snow had ceased falling, the air was clear and bracing, the road downhill, and the walk, in spite of our weariness, pleasant. During the hour and a half we sat waiting for our train in the little shack, we talked happily about the grain we were bringing back and planned our next expedition.

Days went by, but the man who was to bring our barley did not show up. I decided to go back. I set out alone this time. It was a cold but sunny day, and I whistled as I went up the now familiar road. The peasant who had my shoes treated me with a long tale of explanations and excuses, while his wife stood disconsolately by. He had changed his mind and would not part with his barley, so I took back my goods.

I walked rapidly on to parts of the valley which we had not visited before. I packed and unpacked my knapsack in many homes and made several exchanges. Again I had to leave my grain sacks, carrying away only the promise that they would be delivered.

Towards evening I turned back. At the lower end of the valley I was stopped by a man standing in the middle of the road. He was dressed in a short sheepskin coat and long leather boots. He seemed to be waiting for me. As I drew even with him he lifted a heavy club, barring the way.

"You come with me," he said, and set out in the direction of the railroad.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

He only grunted. In front of a two-story building he pointed with his stick and ordered, "You go in there."

I saw a sign over the door. It was the office of the *soltys*, a kind of village sheriff. This made me feel better. The village elder told me that I was being arrested on suspicion of buying grain without a license. Once more I had to undo my pack. Those present examined every item with curiosity. My passport was also scrutinized, page after page, and many questions were asked. It was so late when I was released that I had to run to the station, and I barely got there when I heard the whistle of the train.

I made several more trips into the villages—some alone, others in the company of Ir or Lola. The results were increasingly disappointing. At last we gave up foraging.

February, March, April 1940

by *HANIA*

LARGE migrations of Germans began to move into Poland towards the end of 1939. The Fuehrer, desiring to form a German nucleus in central Europe, was summoning the Germans back from various European countries. In large masses they were relinquishing—some willingly, others not—their adopted countries, and, lured by extravagant promises of wealth, were streaming into Poland. The repatriation of these nationals was done in a great hurry and with a disregard of weather conditions. Shortly after Christmas, when the temperature was between thirty and forty degrees below zero, we heard from the Werles, in great secrecy, that a large transport of Bessarabian Germans had just crossed the German-Russian frontier at Sanok. They had been on their way for several weeks, and many of them had to be hospitalized with frozen

hands and feet. This report failed to touch us. In order to make room for these Germans, hundreds of thousands of Poles were being driven out of their homes and farms in the western sections of Poland, which, on October 26, 1939, had been incorporated into the Reich.

Simultaneously certain groups of Ruthenians from the southern parts of Poland, who had been promised by Communists riches and privileges in the Soviet Union, migrated east. These Ruthenians were permitted to take only a few personal possessions. This, naturally, benefited the Germans, who became the owners of the land and crops of the emigrants, most of whom were peasants. Many of those who had moved to the Soviet Union braved the terrible cold and the double cordon of frontier guards to sneak back. They brought discouraging tales of living conditions.

Another group of people on the move were the Jews. Although realizing that the Soviet Union had little to offer people raised in the West, they stole their way across the border in large numbers, knowing that nothing but death awaited them under the German rule.

Still another group of migrants were young Polish men and women, going south towards Slovakia and Hungary, trying to join the Allied forces.

All this created an indescribable state of confusion and anxiety. In February, Lola went to Cracow on business and brought back the first detailed report on the mass deportations from the West. She told us how, during her stay, she had gone with local women to the freight yards, to meet a train of deportees with food and clothing. For three days the women waited in shifts in the coldest kind of weather. When the train arrived, the German guards went from car to car, opened the doors, and shouted their usual "*Alle raus!*" No one stirred. The committee rushed forward and peered inside, then, horrified, fell back. The cars were jammed with the frozen bodies of men, women, and children. But the guards too had seen. The doors were slammed to, and the train moved away.

That first time we could not believe our ears, but in the

months to come there were many reports of such death trains. The deportees usually were taken to their destination in a roundabout way, traveling four or five days to points only a few hours distant. Deprived of heat, food, and water, they died in great numbers. Mortality among children was especially high. Women would often alight carrying in their arms the dead bodies of their little ones.

Towards the end of February, Mother rallied. It was decided that I would leave with Gaither to stay with him—for a short time at least—in Warsaw. We were anxious to take Mimi with us, but Mother and Father argued that the trip and the living conditions in Warsaw would be too hard on a child, and so we left her in their charge.

Armed with an official permit from the local mayor, the military command, and the *Landrat* of the New Market district, which safeguarded the food we were taking for the trip, we set out on a bitterly cold day. Frequent changes, interminable waits in the open, the necessity of taking one's place on the train by storm, were routine matters.

In our absence from Warsaw, Christine had moved back to her room in Mrs. Adamska's house on Filtrowa Street, where she had lived before the war. She had been promised a job, she said. This, of course, was not true, and I knew that only her pride had made her leave our home. I hurried to her. Christine was out, but Mrs. Adamska—a roly-poly person with merry blue eyes and pale wispy hair—greeted me cordially.

"I'm glad you are taking Christine back," she said when I had explained. "We have no fuel, and our home is icy." Her hands were swollen and covered with purple frostbites, yet her optimistic outlook had not deserted her even now. She hoped that the spring offensive would bring Germany's defeat and that her husband, a war prisoner in Russia, would come home.

The same afternoon I helped Christine pack her clothes, and we said goodbye to Mrs. Adamska.

"It's au revoir, Christine," she said gaily, "and not goodbye."

In another three or four months the Germans will be back in Berlin, and we'll pick up where we left off."

And so Christine moved back into the living room of our apartment in the Methodist Building. Although it was no warmer than the Adamski home, during the day at least she could sit with us around an electric heater that Gaither had miraculously bought somewhere.

Warsaw, during the two and a half months of my absence, had undergone a change. The streets had been cleared, and most of the temporary graves had been removed by Polish and Jewish labor battalions. We saw them everywhere, either working or marching in long columns with spades and picks over their shoulders. The electric plant was operating, and the streetcars were running along the main thoroughfares. But life was harder than it had been in December. In many places one could read posters in German and Polish announcing executions for various political crimes. Other posters threatened with arrest and execution for infringement of regulations of every sort. I read a notice in which a reward of one thousand zlotys was offered to anyone giving information of the whereabouts of a Mr. Kott. Christine explained that he was a man who had been arrested after a search at his home. He had managed to escape from the prison, and three hundred citizens had been taken as hostages. The inhabitants of Warsaw were notified that one hundred of this group would be shot unless the missing man was found within twenty-four hours, and another hundred if he did not turn up by the following day. Kott did not appear, and the hostages were taken to an unknown place. Much later, in midsummer in fact, the Germans published the names of 180 who had been shot in reprisal at that time. We never learned what happened to the remaining 120, but they probably met with the same fate.

I was waiting on Krolewska Street for a streetcar. When it stopped I noticed how jammed the rear of the car was, and so I hastened to the front entrance and got on. In my hurry I hadn't noticed that several Germans were on the front plat-

form. I took a coin out of my purse and asked the conductor, "Is this the correct fare?"

One of the soldiers, a burly fellow, turned on me with fury. "*Du Polnisches Schwein, raus!*" ("You Polish swine, get out!")

Petrified, I stared at him. He grabbed me by the shoulder with one hand and slapped me with the other. I struck back. He was so tall that, although I had aimed at his face, my fist landed on his chest. Two of the other Germans shouted, while the first one groped in his pocket feeling for his gun. The conductor, who had been looking on in horror, suddenly called out to the motorman, and, as the car slowed down for the fraction of a second, he pushed me off into the street. Passers-by helped me pick myself up and brush off the snow.

"What happened? How did you fall out?"

I told them.

"Good God! Don't you know there is a death penalty for striking a German? Lucky for you the conductor had that much presence of mind. The German would have shot you. And don't forget that the front of the car is reserved for Germans."

Streetcar travel often gave rise to such incidents, but we had to face them, deprived as we were of other means of transportation. The Polish section was always jammed. The Germans had automobiles and motorcycles, and did not have to rely on the trolley exclusively. Their section, divided from ours only by a movable bar, was usually half empty.

One evening I was coming home from Nowy Swiat Street on the streetcar. At every stop new crowds pushed their way in, each time shoving me farther up the aisle. At last, with my ribs against the dividing bar, I could move no farther. An old gentleman, white and frail, stood next to me—a doctor, I judged from the little leather case he was carrying and the odor of ether permeating his clothes. The German section was empty. The old gentleman glanced towards it several times, then, hesitantly, lifted the bar and, with a look at the conductor, timidly seated himself in the forbidden part. It wasn't long before two young Brown Shirts came in, talking and

laughing loudly. Stretching their stocky legs, in their shiny black boots, they sprawled insolently, eyeing our congested group, until one of them noticed the old doctor. His shabby clothes, his sad and tired face, must have revealed him as not belonging to the master race. The young Nazi strode up to him. "Deutsch?"

The old man shook his head. The German pointed at the large inscription over the door, "*Nur für Deutsche*," then hit him in the face with such strength that the old man fell to the floor. His hat rolled under one of the benches, the satchel crashed under another with a loud clatter of instruments. This is how we were taught to obey orders.

All over Warsaw—and I dare say all over Poland—people shivered in their homes, and froze their hands, feet, and noses. Eight out of every ten people we knew had no fuel whatever. Cold was an even greater trial than hunger. Pipes burst. Those who had old-fashioned tile stoves were fortunate. They could at least break up a piece of furniture once in a while and make a fire. But those who, like us, lived in modern, steam-heated apartments, were out of luck. Officially there was no coal or coke for the Poles, and that which the black market offered was sold at prohibitive prices.

Early in the summer, as was his practice, Gaither had bought coke for the Methodist Building. Ordinarily it would have lasted through October and most of November. Now it had to be stretched to last all winter. The furnace man fired up only enough to keep the water pipes from freezing.

The electric heater was kept in Michael and Lydia's room, for they were more coldblooded than the rest of us. In our free moments we huddled around it. Otherwise we worked, ate, and often slept bundled up in our warmest clothing, seldom shedding overcoats and furs. On nights when the wind was from the west, Christine would come into our room (thus stark necessity molds proprieties) and share my twin bed with me.

The dining room, where, clinging to prewar standards, we still took our meals, was like a refrigerator. Before entering it

we braced ourselves as for a cold plunge. We always tried to swallow our food before it became completely chilled.

When we couldn't bear the cold any longer, we'd go to bed. We'd crawl in under piled-up rugs and quilts, fur coats, and blankets, and lie there trying to get warm. The newspapers under our mattresses and between the layers of blankets, for insulation, helped, but the rustling of paper was annoying.

There were no theaters, no motion pictures, no lectures, that first winter. There was no point in going to anyone else's home, for it was always just as cold as your own. When by and by a few coffeehouses opened, people flocked to them. These *cukiernias* as they are called in Poland were lit and heated—thanks to the bribes the owners handed out to the proper people. For a few pennies one could get a steaming cup of substitute tea or coffee and an almost genuine piece of pastry. Even the poorest scraped their pennies together for a cup of something hot so they could sit over it—sometimes for hours—reading, writing, or knitting around the little marble-top tables. The *cukiernias* were the only meeting places for friends and business associates. They served a very real purpose in keeping the people from freezing. But they soon became an eyesore to the Germans, who accused the Poles of squandering their money. Kurt, who dropped in one afternoon, said, "Look at the crowds that flock there. They must have plenty of money to waste it on tea and coffee."

One day Christine and I were getting ready to go out when Janka came in. "I hope you're not going to one of the *cukiernias*," she said. "Last night the Germans made raids on several, and they arrested all the women."

We thought it was irresponsible gossip, but we found the Cameleon, a near-by *cukiernia*, almost empty. From the grief-stricken owner we learned that many women had been taken to police headquarters—some of them gray-haired matrons, others girls in their teens, and many who had been in the company of husbands or other relatives. All were treated as common prostitutes and given a brutal medical examination by the German police doctors.

Many of them never came back home. Later these Polish women were sent to army brothels.

Christine returned from downtown one day greatly excited. "Do you know the Latineks are here? Ola told me. I met her on the street."

Christine had the address. I put on three pairs of cotton hose and two pairs of woolen drawers, for the day was bitterly cold, and hurried to Okreg Street. I climbed to the fifth floor of a large apartment building that had evidently been hit by a bomb, for it was split from top to bottom and the staircase was precariously propped up with rafters.

Mr. and Mrs. Latinek, old friends of my parents, had been well-to-do people. Their home had been in Poznan, and Gaither and I, when we lived in that city, had enjoyed their hospitality frequently. I found them in a small, almost bare room. They kissed me, but they were so changed that for a while I could not trust myself to speak. Mrs. Latinek sat down on one of the two iron cots, I took the only chair, and Mr. Latinek went out to borrow a chair for himself from a family of refugees living in the adjoining room.

I asked about their daughter. "Where is Danuta? And how is her husband?"

"She is still on the staff of the hospital in Torun, and Boleslaw is in a war prisoners' camp in Germany."

"Why are you here?"

"We were deported in the first days of December," said Mr. Latinek bitterly. "I thought they would not bother us. We are old people, and I never took part in political activities."

"How are the Manowskis, the Hoppes, the Hedingers?"

"Killed. All killed."

They told me of unbelievable murder and terror that had descended on the western provinces of Poland with the invasion. In Szamotuly, a small town near Poznan, the brother of one of our former maids had been put to death with five other young peasants. In Otorowo, eight had been shot on October 2, eighteen on October 23, and forty-two on November 7. In Gniezno not only professional and businessmen

but also many workingmen and peasants had been executed. They told me about the terrible period between October 20 and 25, when mass executions had taken place all over the district of Poznan.

Mr. Latinek had one day found himself in a crowd that was suddenly surrounded by the S.S. troops, who hurried them into the market square. The square was decorated with flags and greenery, as if in readiness for some festivity. Finally the police marched in five men and lined them up with their backs to the wall of the Municipal Building. Their clothes were soiled and torn, their faces bruised. One looked as if his eye had been put out; another, too exhausted to stand alone, had to be supported by his companions. As the firing squad approached, many in the crowd tried to break away. But the S.S. guard would not let them go. Women screamed and fainted. After the execution the witnesses were allowed to disperse. The bodies were left lying where they had fallen. The Latincks estimated that in the district of Poznan alone twenty thousand people had been killed from the time of the invasion up to the last of December, 1939.

"But how were you deported?" I asked Mrs. Latinek.

"In the usual way. We were among the first from the city. A German had been billeted with us for several weeks, and we thought this was a guarantee against our being put out of our home. One evening the lights went out. We simply thought something had happened at the power plant."

Towards three in the morning, they were awakened by pounding on the door. Mr. Latinek, in his dressing gown and slippers, went to open it. He was pushed aside violently as six armed soldiers trooped in. One of them flashed a light into his eyes and barked out, "Get dressed and get out. I give you fifteen minutes. Put your money and your jewelry on the dining room table before you go."

"Why, you can't——"

The soldier struck him on the head. "Shut up! The Fuehrer's orders. Get going!"

They were told they could carry away only what they had on. They searched in the dark for clothes and shoes.

"My hands shook so," said Mrs. Latinek, "that I could hardly fasten my dress."

"And I," added her husband, "didn't notice until the following day that one of my shoes was brown and the other black."

The soldiers followed them down the steps, adding to their confusion by swearing and shouting constantly. Mrs. Latinek begged to be allowed to take two pillows and some sheets, but they were given only a blanket apiece before being brutally pushed into the street. Here they joined a large group of people evicted like themselves.

It was December 8, and bitterly cold. They were held in the street until the whole quarter had been evacuated. Then all were marched to an empty factory on the outskirts of town. The building was soon filled with hundreds of *evacués*. There was little straw, and most of them sat on the bare cement floor, weeping and sobbing. Someone tried to kill himself. An elderly man who had lost his mind writhed on the floor. A young woman who had become separated from her child in the confusion shrieked wildly. Cold and hungry, these people were kept there for several days. The Germans searched them repeatedly to make sure they had not concealed any valuables. Wedding rings were taken away. Dry black bread was doled out in small quantities, and a bit of brew which was supposed to be coffee. New deportees were added every night.

In a corner of the hall a woman gave birth to a baby. A doctor was found among the imprisoned, but there were no medical supplies, no hot water, nothing to wrap the infant in. But the news spread, and people started bringing whatever they had. One woman tore off half of the shawl she wore, the only possession she had carried with her. A man surrendered his only handkerchief for a diaper. Others brought their rations of coffee to bathe the baby in, this being the only liquid at their disposal. Listening to this, I thought of the Nativity, with a factory building instead of a manger and destitute people

bringing gifts more precious than the gold and frankincense and myrrh of the Magi.

On the eighth day of their imprisonment, they were taken to the station and packed into freight cars. Before the Latineks' car was sealed, the police tossed in a blood-soaked bundle. It was a woman who, when the soldiers had come for her, had slashed her throat with a razor. She had been brought wrapped in her own blanket, gurgling with spouting blood. The people locked up with her could only watch her agony helplessly.

During the four days their journey lasted, the deportees were given neither food nor water. They sat on the cold, bare boards of the floor, trying to guess what their fate was to be. They thought the journey would never end. At last the doors were thrown open, and they were ordered to get out.

"It was a terrible moment," said Mr. Latinek. "Nothing but snow-covered fields on both sides of the tracks, not a house in sight, not even a road."

Pushed by the guards, they jumped stiffly from the high boxcars and fell into a deep, snow-filled ditch.

When the Latineks reached a small hamlet, some peasants took them in and fed them hot soup and potatoes. They informed them that they were in the district of Lublin.

"The trip from Poznan to this part of the country should not have lasted more than twelve hours. They must have made a wide circuit on purpose," added Mrs. Latinek.

By and by they got to Warsaw. And so they were here, living on what friends could give them until they could find some means of making a living, and eating at public soup kitchens.

"We have tried several soup kitchens," they assured me earnestly, "but the one in the basement of the Y.M.C.A. building is the best. The soup there is really delicious."

Thinking what gourmets they'd always been, I didn't know whether to smile or to cry.

Warsaw was no longer the prostrate city that I had found in the fall. Tears and complaints had been replaced by grim determination.

New deportees were pouring in day after day, and among them we met many friends—friends from Poznan, Katowice, Bydgoszcz, Grudziadz. It was hard to find room for these people in a city as badly damaged by bombings as Warsaw. Those who had relatives or friends went to live with them. Others—thousands of others—went to live in the barracks for the homeless. It was even harder to find employment for such masses. Polish stores had either been taken over lock, stock, and barrel by the Germans, or were closing for lack of merchandise. All going concerns were either given German managers—*Treuhänder*—or confiscated outright. The healthier, more enterprising Poles went into a new kind of business: the black market. Walking around in Koszykowa Street, where most of our marketing was done, I would often come across men we had known as doctors, lawyers, artists, scientists—men who only a few months ago had never been inside their own kitchens—selling potatoes, weighing horse meat, or wrapping soup bones, as if to the manner born.

Looting was done systematically. It was a common sight to see Germans carrying merchandise out of stores and piling it into waiting cars and trucks. Hordes of German rovers had come in the wake of the military and were taking whatever met their fancy.

I was at the Kaminiskis one day when a large blonde in a sable coat came in. She looked reflectively around as she strolled through the apartment, while we followed her silently. She explained casually that she was looking for a nice, well-furnished home and that she was a *Volksdeutsche*. Her manner showed that she considered this quite natural. She did not flaunt any sign of animosity, which usually goes with a consciousness of guilt. Luckily my friends' place did not suit her.

It took us a long while to understand the new social system—a system based on complete inequality. The citizens of the Reich and those of the conquered territories were divided into separate classes, whose privileges and rights were sharply differentiated.

Starting at the top were the members of the N.S.D.A.P.—

the *Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei*. Their privileges were unlimited, their power over the conquered people was absolute.

The *Reichsdeutsche*—Germans born in the Reich—even those who did not officially belong to the party, ranked almost as high. They had access, in Poland, to whatever the country had to offer. If they paid at all, they paid nominal prices. When they chose not to do so, there was no means of getting justice. When rationing was introduced in Poland, these first two classes of citizens were allotted all that was necessary to assure them proper, well-balanced nourishment and a satisfied stomach.

The *Volksdeutsche*—Germans born outside the *Vaterland*—came next. Their food rations, though smaller, were sufficient; in other things they enjoyed nearly the same privileges as the first two groups.

Citizens of neutral countries and friendly minorities, such as Ukrainians and Lithuanians, rated almost as high as the *Volksdeutsche*.

But after all these classes, and divided from them by a large social and legal barrier, came the *minderwertiges Element* (the inferior element)—the Poles and Jews.

Poles with German names who did not want to sign up as *Volksdeutsche* were subject to special reprisals and persecutions. They almost formed a class by themselves.

“The Poles are racially inferior and consequently objects of exploitation. The law will have to treat them as such,” the District Commissioner of Poznan said in one of his speeches.

We had not seen Kurt for several weeks, a fact we did not deplore. But we had heard that he had signed up as a *Volksdeutscher*. When he came, however, he had in his lapel the badge worn only by the *Reichsdeutsche*. His merits must have been of no mean nature if he, born abroad, had been taken to the bosom of the *Vaterland*. He was wearing custom-made shoes and a flashy new suit, and he radiated enthusiasm and joy as he threw himself into the chair we had not offered.

“Well, and what shall it be? Headache powders, aspirin,

iodine, bandages, or cough drops? You may have anything you want for the asking," he said.

We showed our surprise.

"Yes, my dear friends, you may congratulate me. I am the owner of two pharmaceutical concerns. I signed the deeds this morning." Kurt had never had any money, and we did not have to guess at the origin of his sudden wealth. In his exuberance he did not notice our lack of response. For two hours he gave us an account of his rise from modest *Treuhänder* to owner of the factories he had been assigned to manage only two months before.

Our former maid, Natalie, whom I met on the street, also showed marks of brand-new wealth. She was sporting a fine caracul coat. It was too large for her—she had not bothered to have it altered—and she was flopping around in it. She addressed me politely. "*Wie geht es Ihnen, Frau Pastor?*" ("How are you, Madam Pastor?")

I answered in Polish, wondering where she had picked up her German. With the coat, probably. She told me she was being transferred to Poznan, to a tobacco factory.

"I've always wanted to live in Germany," she added.

Infuriated by this, I said caustically, "Natalie, your German is very poor. I think you had better improve it. Any time you are free I'll be glad to take you to a man who can give you lessons. He is a Pole, deported from Poznan."

It went over her head, and she said goodbye placidly.

Rationing of food came into effect, and clothes were about to be rationed. We tried quickly to buy the most necessary articles. Gaither needed socks badly, but in our district they had already vanished. However, Christine told me of a little shop on Elektoralna Street where they still could be bought. There I found what I wanted, and was selecting some when two Germans came in. The elderly shopkeeper whispered to me apologetically, "I'm sorry, but you'll have to wait. They have to be looked after first. It's the law, you know."

Standing aside, I watched them finger handkerchiefs, underwear, gloves, and stockings. They did not ask about prices, nor

did they try to bargain. How typical of men, I thought to myself. When everything had been neatly wrapped, they turned to the door. The merchant cleared his throat with embarrassment.

"Gentlemen, you have forgotten to pay."

"To pay? What for?" asked one of them over his shoulder.

"For all the things you have just bought."

"That's right," said the German, putting his hand in his pocket. "Here you are." He deposited a small coin on the counter with a laugh.

"But, gentlemen," the poor man wailed. "You can't do that. This is the last of my stock."

The other soldier, already at the door, turned, put his large parcel on the floor, came back slowly, and said, "Wait, Max. He wants me to pay him. All right, I'll pay him."

Grabbing the little shopkeeper by the necktie, he backed him against the counter and, with his free hand, rained blows on his face. At the third or fourth blow, blood spurted from the man's nose, but the soldier went on hitting, at the nose, at the teeth, under the chin, until his own hand and the victim's face were covered with blood.

"Oh, please, don't——" I cried, trying to get hold of his arm. He gave me a shove that sent me reeling against the opposite wall. In tears I appealed to the other German.

"Well, he asked for it, didn't he? And you get out, unless you want a dose of the same."

The best parts of the city were designated for Germans, and the Poles were evicted from their homes at a moment's notice. Our scattered friends were living crowded together either with relatives or in cold, bare rooms.

Alice was one of those who had had to vacate. I went to see her and was appalled at her destitution. Her husband, formerly a mining engineer, was employed as a garbage collector. She showed me her baby, which looked sickly and pale. It was wrapped in rags, and pus was oozing out of one of its little ears.

"The baby is sick," said Alice, "but we have no money for a doctor or medicine. They didn't even let me take the diapers and baby blankets when we were thrown out." She asked me if I couldn't find among my things something that could be fashioned into baby garments. At home I went through my linens. I took out a nightgown, a slip, some sheets. Suddenly I realized that it would be very hard to give them away. This article I knew could be made over for Mimi; that one I could wear myself for a long time to come; none of them could be replaced as long as the war lasted. I looked at the little pile of clothes, hating to part with them and at the same time appalled at my selfishness. Hitherto I had been inclined to think of myself as rather generous. I had always given willingly, not realizing that my gifts entailed no sacrifice. This was the first time that a gift required a supreme effort. At last I tore myself away from my hesitations, added a few more garments, and gave the pile to Christine to keep, so that I would not be tempted to withdraw anything.

Next I looked up my cousin Lucy. She had been evicted from her home and was living now with her sister-in-law, Maria Dabrowska, a well-known writer. Lucy and her two children, Ella and George, were occupying the dining room. Another refugee had been given the bedroom. Maria Dabrowska herself had kept the living room. Ella and George should have been in school, but, although a few of the grammar schools in Warsaw were open, they could not attend because they lacked coats, underwear, stockings, and shoes. Lucy spent all her time either standing in line at one of the public kitchens or hunting for a job.

She told me that our Aunt Sophie had lost her husband and all her possessions and was now in Warsaw. I looked her up on Krucza Street, where she was working in a small shop over which hung a homemade sign with the words, *Sklep Komisowy* (Secondhand Store) painted on it. I looked at the junk littering the show window and found it hard to associate chipped plates, shiny coats, and misshapen shoes with this aunt, who had always been the epitome of elegance. I walked in. Aunt Sophie,

hugging a mangy seal coat, was eagerly displaying some shirts to a shabbily dressed woman.

"No, they are not new, as you see," she was saying, with her distinguished inflections. "In fact, part of the left sleeve is almost gone, but the price is most attractive."

After the customer had departed I stepped closer, and she recognized me—with tears and exclamations. She offered me a rickety stool behind the counter. "Here," she said, placing a folded newspaper under my feet. "This will be better. You will feel the cold less."

When I asked her how she was, she said with her charming smile, "Thank you, surprisingly well. Money is rather scarce and so is food, but, thank goodness, at last I don't have to watch my diet."

"But this work, it's so different. How can you bear it?"

"As a matter of fact, I like business very much. Only the people who come here are so depressing."

I thought how little the social and economic upheaval had really changed her.

Our conversation was continually interrupted. All sorts of people came in, some to sell and some to buy. A girl appeared with a pair of skis. Aunt Sophie bought them and asked the girl if she wouldn't sell her ski pants as well.

"No indeed," she said laughing. "I wear them around the house all the time. We have no fuel."

A woman with a little child bought a pair of old rubbers. An old gentleman, very distinguished even in his threadbare clothes, came in and took out of his pocket a little box wrapped in tissue paper. He unwrapped the box, opened it, looked at the contents. Then he turned to my aunt with false briskness and said, "I gave these to my wife on our first anniversary. She is dead now, and this is the last thing left. How much can you give me?"

Aunt Sophie said she would have to ask an expert. They arranged to consult a jeweler together the next day.

After the old man had gone, she showed me the box. It held a pair of earrings of finest gold filigree, with a pearl at each

tip. I thought of the love and tenderness symbolized in this ornament, but my aunt shook her head and said, "I know how you feel. But to me these are even more pitiful." She produced from under the counter a pair of broken-down shoes, carefully polished.

Secondhand stores like the one where my aunt worked were numerous in Warsaw, and after clothes rationing came into effect their number tripled. But before this happened and while there was still free trade, a funny incident occurred. I was in a dry goods store on Marszalkowska Street, buying outing flannel, when I saw a German private come in.

"Do you speak German?" he asked the owner. She said she didn't.

Intent on my business, I paid no further attention. Suddenly the soldier was shouting, "*Nein, zum Teufel!* ("No, the devil!") I don't want white, and I don't want black. I've told you so a dozen times. I want something bright."

The owner probably understood what he was saying, but did not dare to let on. The German, thoroughly angry, pounded the counter and shouted louder and louder.

The girl who had been waiting on me leaned over and whispered, "Do you speak German?"

I nodded.

"Oh, please interpret for us. He's awfully mad. He might shoot."

I stepped forward and asked in German, "What is it you want?"

He turned to me, relieved that someone spoke his language. "I want something bright for my girl back home. And this blithering idiot shows me nothing but sheeting or this black stuff. Tell them," he ordered, "to give me something *bunt*."

With composure, I turned to the shopkeeper and said in Polish, "This gentleman wants *bunt*. Do you understand?" The word in German means colored, bright; in Polish, mutiny or revolution.

The woman, without batting an eyelid, answered, "Kindly tell the gentleman that it's still too early for *bunt*. We'll have it

later. Maybe in the summertime, or next year perhaps. But I promise that one of these days he will have all the *bunt* he may wish for."

When I had translated her words, the soldier walked out. Unable to contain ourselves any longer, we burst into peals of laughter. He must have overhead, for he strode back, black with fury. But as he looked at us he was confronted by sober and courteous faces. His suspicions unallayed, he did not know what to do next. At last he stalked out, slamming the glass door.

The cold, the crowding, the struggle for daily bread, discouraged all social life. Curfew, which by ten o'clock sequestered all in their homes, was a further hindrance. No infringement of this law was tolerated, and people could circulate in the streets after police hours only with special permits. Such an *Ausweis* was not easily obtained, and even its possession did not always protect one. Taught by such examples as that of Dr. Borowy, who, returning one night from a patient, was shot before he had a chance to produce his permit, we scurried home nervously at the approach of the hour. Guests who over-stayed had to be put up for the night, so that it became an accepted custom to remind them of the time whenever they protracted their visit. Those who met talked only about one thing—about the spring, the Allied offensive it would bring, and the downfall of Germany which automatically would follow.

Being American citizens, we had been permitted to keep our radio. We spent much time listening to British broadcasts. Friends from all over the city came to hear the news. When they asked us *Co slychac?* (What's the news?), it was a question brimful with the hopes of a suffering nation. The faith in the French Army, the French nation, was unshaken.

"Maybe the British are not ready yet. Maybe on land they are not such good fighters. Ah, but France! Remember the First World War? And now the Maginot Line. The Germans will break their legs if they try to take that hurdle."

I did not share that faith. I listened to the French broadcasts and felt they were not the voice of a fighting people.

"You are always a pessimist," Gaither would say. And friends to whom I expressed my opinion either turned away crossly or accused me of pro-Nazi sympathies.

Days dragged by slowly, punctuated with many arrests and executions.

Letters were supposedly uncensored, but we knew they were perused, and we wrote guardedly. From Mother's and Father's letters we knew it was no better in the country.

Many reprisals were connected with the secret press, which had begun to function during the winter. The first underground papers, deposited by mysterious hands in our letter box or under the door, were hastily-thrown-together bulletins, mimeographed on cheap news stock, in foolscap size. Soon they came printed on smooth-finish paper and carried carefully written, constructive articles. They increased in number and were eagerly snatched up, though the mere possession of such a sheet meant death. Almost every week a printing press was detected, but this did not decrease the number of publications or deter the reading public. These underground papers were a powerful weapon against the enemy. They disseminated news, exposed German propaganda lies, revived hopes, strengthened resistance.

Heroes are always scarce. Maybe in normal times there weren't many among the people, but the Germans had taught us contempt for death, and now everybody resisted heroically. The millions of little acts of opposition to the New Order, the imperceptible deeds of defiance of insignificant men and women, directed by the underground, constituted effective opposition to the enemy forces.

Mother had written asking me to buy her some articles of underwear: "With the usual malice of inanimate things, mine have chosen to go to pieces right now." The Square of the Iron Gate was the only place where such things could still be bought, and so it was there I went. Before the war there had been, in the middle of the square, an enormous round building

that housed hundreds of stalls crammed with silks, cottons, woolens, stockings, gloves, and bedding. During the fighting it had been razed. In its place, there swarmed thousands of tradespeople, with their wares in boxes, baskets, and suitcases. Many of the merchants were Jews who had managed to save some of their stock out of the fires that had swept the business sections of the city. Most of the goods were prewar, as nothing was being manufactured in Poland for Poles and nothing imported. I threaded my way through the throng, dived into hampers and bags, and found ladies' underwear. I explained to the motherly Jewish woman who owned it what I wanted.

"I have just the thing you're looking for," she said, with such eagerness that her wig shook. "You want something real good."

She scratched around the bottom of her basket and pulled out three pairs of bloomers. "Look at the cut. The color. The finish. And the price is only ninety zlotys."

"Why!" I exclaimed in horror. "Before the war you could have bought two cows for ninety zlotys."

She raised mournful eyes, as if imploring the heavens to bear her witness. "You think it's too much? For such elegant underwear? Look at it! All prewar stuff. Not one of those cheap things they smuggle in from Germany. Real antiques."

Feeling chilly, I let myself be convinced and paid. I must admit, though, that neither Mother nor I had any reason to regret the transaction, for the "antiques" proved their genuineness in long wear.

On the streetcar going home I pushed my way up the aisle until I rested against the dividing bar. Here at least I would not be mauled by all the passengers getting in and out. A girl got on and made her way to my side. She was dressed in flashy clothes and had an obvious come-hither look.

The German section of the car was almost empty, as usual, but at the Main Station a German officer got aboard and sat down. He glanced at our section with arrogance until he saw the girl at my side. He gave her a broad wink and beckoned

her to come over. She did not stir. Thinking that she hadn't noticed his signal, he beckoned again, but she didn't move. At last he called out to her, "*Kommen Sie her, Fraulein! 'S gibt genug Platz für uns beide.*" ("Come over here, young lady. There is room enough for both of us.")

She continued to look straight ahead, through him, as if he were not there. I saw his face slowly turn purple, as he took in the snub. All our eyes were fastened on him, though not a sound was uttered, not a sign passed over our faces. He dashed out on the platform, jumped off, not waiting for the car to stop, and fled our mute derision.

In the latter part of February the hostage system was put into effect. In rural communities it was even more dreaded than in the cities. In early March, Ir came from Bory, bringing with him one of the posters that notified the population of the measures:

Notice! By a decree of February 23, 1940, the Kreishauptmann of New Market has ordered the mayoralty to prepare a list of hostages who will be responsible for order and public security within the area of the above-mentioned mayoralty. This responsibility shall be especially exercised to prevent all acts of sabotage, such as the destruction of telephone communications, bridges, etc. In the event of subversive action, if the culprit is not found those persons whose names are posted on this list must answer before the law. The penalty for an act of sabotage is imprisonment or death. The lists of hostages are to be prepared every two weeks, being valid for fourteen days, names to be taken alphabetically according to streets and rural habitations. . . .

The hostages named in Bory were the mayor, the doctor, the principal of the school, one of the priests, and several others, for the first two weeks; Father, the owner of the drug-store, the younger priest, and a number of farmers for the next two weeks. If the Germans thought that the threat of collective responsibility would break the Poles' resistance, they were disappointed. Collective responsibility did not stop the work of the underground but merely made it difficult.

Members of the underground had to be assigned to distant communities where no family ties would hinder them from carrying out their work. For though these men and women did not flinch from risking their own lives, they would not wish to jeopardize the lives of their relatives.

One cold and wet day—we had spent most of it at home—Christine sat hugging the radiator, forgetting that it carried no warmth, and I turned on the radio. But I soon snapped it off, for the news from England was vague, and the French communiqués were wishy-washy. We didn't feel like talking, afraid of reverting to the same story of deaths and arrests. Gaither came in and asked, "Why all this gloom?"

I jumped up. "Oh Gates, I can't stand this any longer. I'll go crazy if this doesn't end pretty soon."

Gaither patted my back. "You've got to bear it, dear. We can't give way. Come, let's go, all three of us, to the *cukiernia*. We'll feel better when we get warm."

But Christine and I wouldn't hear of it. The night before there had been many raids throughout the city, and a number of women had again been taken.

"Why don't you read something?" suggested Gaither. "Go to the lending library and get something light that will keep your mind off the war."

"All right, I will."

I went to the Skamander. The two women who owned this lending library were still there, but the shelves in the first room were half empty, and the next room was locked, its door sealed with strips of paper bearing the German stamp. Into this room the Germans had put the French, English, and Russian books. Many books had been purged. In the catalogue they were crossed out with an indelible pencil. The librarians told me that the German censor had found, among the books for children, one entitled *Our Friends and Our Enemies*. Never doubting that the words friends and enemies could be applied in any but a political sense, he had stricken it off the list. The book dealt with Polish birds.

But books were so out of keeping with reality that it was

hard to follow a story. One day a stray issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal* (it had been on its way for several months) reached me. I thumbed through the pages. Fashions—an article on homemaking—fall planting in the garden—interior decorating. Suddenly I laughed. Didn't they know in America that homes were something to be bombed, or a place where they came to arrest you? Didn't they know that gardens were wonderful places for executing people who owned them? Were they still buying rugs and gay chintzes so that a German could enjoy them some day?

That very day I was on my way to the Latineks—they had been turned out of their quarters on Okreg Street, which was being cleared for *nur Deutsche* (Germans only), and now were living on Szara Street—when all of a sudden a machine-gun volley was fired not far away.

"What was that?" I asked a woman who was passing.

"You know. It's about three—the usual time. It's over there." She pointed imperceptibly to the left. "The Parliament Gardens. But you'd better not stop. Keep moving."

It was in the gardens surrounding the Parliament on Wiejska Street that executions took place. The usual time was three in the afternoon.

At the Latineks' I met Miss Sokalska. She told us that her sister-in-law had been deported with her four small children and had just arrived from Rypin. Miss Sokalska's brother, a schoolteacher, had been carried away one night in January with thirty-four others. For many weeks the wife had tried to find out where he had been taken. Now she knew. Shortly before her deportation, when the ground had thawed out, dogs had dug up some bones in a near-by forest. Among the remains she had recognized her husband's coat.

One morning Gaither handed me a slip of paper in German, marked with an official seal. "Read this for me," he said.

It was a summons from the Gestapo. Gaither was to appear the following morning at eleven, on Szucha Avenue.

"I'll go with you as an interpreter," I said. He protested, but I would not give in. So many who had been summoned never

returned. Sometimes weeks passed before the family found out what had happened.

All night I tossed, and in the morning I could hardly swallow my breakfast of strawberry leaf tea and black bread. It was my first visit to the Gestapo headquarters. As we entered the building everything seemed terrifying. We passed the helmeted sentries at the gate and crossed the yard. In the vestibule we passed more sentries and went up to a large plate-glass window, behind which a low-ranking Gestapo official sat. He asked in excellent Polish, when Gaither showed him the summons, "Your name? Address? Who is the woman with you?" He entered the answers on a form, then glanced at his wrist watch and put down the exact minute of our arrival.

The Kommissar who had summoned Gaither was a youngish man with sandy hair and fishy eyes. I asked him if he spoke English or Polish, but he answered curtly, "*Nur Deutsch.*" ("Only German.") Something in his shifty gaze made us sure he was lying.

He asked several perfunctory questions about the organization and membership of our church, then, losing all interest in Gaither, switched his attention to me. "Are you an American, Mrs. Warfield?"

"A naturalized American citizen. I am a Pole by birth."

"Do you have an American passport?" I produced it, but he didn't take it. "Is it still valid? You haven't been back to the States since 1931. Isn't there a law——?"

"It's valid. We are missionaries, and the time limitation does not apply to us."

"You still feel and think as a Pole, though, don't you?"

"I do."

"To what political party did you belong before the war?"

"To none. I wasn't interested in politics. Most women aren't, you know."

"I don't believe you," he interrupted me rudely. "All Poles liked to toy with politics, and everybody belonged to at least one organization. I have proofs here." And he thumped a pile of papers with his hand.

Stung by his tone, I replied hotly, "Then why do you ask if you know better and don't believe what I say?"

Gaither understood little of what we were saying, but the Kommissar's tone made him uneasy. Under cover of the desk he tugged at my sleeve. Somehow my nervousness had left me, and I squeezed his hand to show him I was not afraid.

My examiner suddenly changed his approach. In a much softer voice he asked, "Did you have any Jews among your friends before the war, or any Russians?"

"Yes, many Jews, and several Russians." What was he leading up to?

"So you are a sincere Christian. You really believe in the Bible?"

"Naturally. I would not have married a minister otherwise."

"And do you believe in equality and brotherly love?"

"I do."

"You don't think Jews belong to an inferior race? You don't think they should be segregated from the Aryans?"

"Of course not. There are good Jews and there are bad; as a whole they are neither better nor worse than any other group." I could not help remembering that a friend of ours had been sent to a concentration camp for stating the same view.

"Isn't that what the Communists teach also?"

"I'm not well acquainted with their teachings. But as far as I know they tolerate no discrimination on the grounds of a man's nationality or race."

"Ah, so you sympathize with the Communists!"

Good Lord! Was the man trying to prove that I was a Communist? As he reverted again and again to the question of communism, I exclaimed at last, impatiently, "You are wasting your time. You want to know if I am a Communist. Well, I am not. But I am not surprised that you suspect me. People often looked askance at us even before the war. Because we had friends of different nationalities and races, some said we were Communists, others said we were Jews, and there were

even some who thought—of all things!—that we were Germans and Nazis. Can you beat it?"

He jerked as if something had stung him, then changed his line of talk. After a few questions on our income, which weren't hard to answer, he started a monologue. He tipped back his chair, lighted a cigarette, and talked at length about the superiority of the German people, the influence of German culture on the world, and the purity of race. We had heard it so many times from others. Flipping the ashes from his cigarette, he said, "The Christians believe in the sanctity of matrimony, but we believe only in the sanctity of motherhood. Tell me, is there anything more beautiful, more holy, than a mother, regardless of whether she is married or not?"

I replied, "Is motherhood in itself so wonderful? After all, every cow and every dog gives birth to its young. But when a mother teaches her offspring love, mercy, humanity—that is wonderful."

His face grew red, but he said in a falsely benevolent tone, "Ah well, maybe you can't see it as we do." Then he abruptly sat up straight in his chair, and said in a hard voice, "But what will you say if I tell you what our plan is for Poland? What will you answer, you Frau Warfield, a Pole, if I tell you that in two years not a single Jew will be left alive, and in ten years not a single Pole?"

I looked at him with curiosity.

"Come on, speak out. You are so good at answering questions. I want to hear what you have to say this time."

"You Germans," I said slowly, "are strong, and you are clever. Your leaders have made plans. Maybe it is the Lord's will that our nation should disappear. Other nations have disappeared, as history teaches us. But human plans have been known to miscarry. Remember the First World War?"

He jumped up, went to the window, and looked into the yard. I wondered what the penalty would be for this frank answer. But when the Kommissar turned around, he was smiling politely.

"Well, we've had a long conversation and a most interesting

one. You have almost persuaded me that there is still some value in Christianity. It gives you the courage to speak up, if nothing else. Goodbye. One of these days we must have another talk." And he waved us away.

At home I repeated that conversation to Gaither and Christine.

"Do they really mean to kill all the Poles and all the Jews?" I asked.

"Nonsense," said Gaither. "How could they exterminate thirty-five million people? It wouldn't be feasible. The man just wanted to see your reaction."

It didn't take us long, however, to realize that the Kommissar had told the truth about Germany's plans. Unable to find Quislings among Polish leaders, the Germans gave up all attempts at collaboration with the Poles and entered on a bloody program of extermination.

Christine's health was worrying us. Deprived of her job by the war and unable to find another, she was breaking under the enforced inactivity. We decided it would be best for her to go to Bory, where she could make her home with Mother and Father. So one day, shortly before Easter, we put her on the train. I was to follow as soon as work in my parents' garden could be started.

Spring was late, and it was the last of April when I set out for Bory. Going to the station, I had my first ride in a ricksha. Gaither and I went in one; Bruno followed in another with my luggage. It was fun to sit in the little attachment in front of the bicycle, while the ricksha man, perched behind, pedaled. It was hard work, requiring good lungs and muscles, especially uphill.

There was the usual crowd at the station, and we waited many hours. Bruno, always resourceful, said to Gaither, "No use trying to get in through a door. We'll hoist her through a window."

Just then the train puffed in, and a stampede started towards it. Bruno steered us to one of the Polish coaches. The window above me was so high, I didn't see how I could reach it, but

Gaither and Bruno had already grabbed me by the legs and I felt myself hoisted until the lower edge of the window appeared on the level of my nose. Thrashing around with my arms, I implored them to let go, but they gave me a powerful shove and I flew through the air. I heard the buttons on the front of my coat rip. I landed inside the compartment on my head, with my skirt and coat flapping around it. Somebody helped me to right myself, and I sank down on a hard bench, dazed by my meteoric entrance into the coach. I tried to apologize, to explain that this was not my usual way of boarding a train, but everybody was helping pull in my two bags that Gaither was holding up to the window. By the time he and Bruno had gone, it was dark. I could make out only vague contours of my fellow passengers in the compartment—two women and four men. Not bad—we wouldn't be too crowded.

It was still too early to sleep, so we talked, at first cautiously, feeling our ground. When we felt sure that we were "among ourselves," we gave free rein to our tongues. One of the men said he had been a schoolteacher but was now dealing in shoe leather. Another man, when asked whether he was selling or buying, laughed and said, "Both. I was a bank clerk, but now I travel from village to village looking for beef. If I find it and get it to Warsaw, I have no trouble selling it. If they ever catch me—they'll make beef out of me in a concentration camp."

The woman by the window, the wife of an officer—he had been missing since September, 1939—said she was smuggling alcohol from Cracow to Warsaw. The other woman was peddling sewing thread and cotton hose; before the invasion she had been a lawyer.

The two men on my left said that they were mechanics.

"And why are you traveling?"

"We are going to visit relatives in the country." Their voices indicated a good university education.

It was my turn to introduce myself, and I gave the reason for my trip and my destination. I felt the two men on my left

stir. The one whom his companion called Stefan asked me, "Isn't Bory in the mountains, very close to the border?"

"For heaven's sake!" I said to myself. "The fools! They are giving themselves away. How can I stop them? How can I warn them?" The opportunity presented itself.

It was a time when all Warsaw was running to fortunetellers. Deprived of radios, newspapers, and any contact with the outer world, people were turning to clairvoyants for information. When one of the passengers mentioned having been to an occultist, I sat up. This was my chance. Clearing my throat, I said modestly, "I am a clairvoyant myself. I can read a person's past, present, and future out of his palm."

A buzz of excitement went through the compartment.

"I wish you could tell my fortune."

"And mine!"

"If we could only have some light in here."

The meat-selling bank clerk scratched around in his bag and produced a pencil-sized flashlight. The battery was almost dead, but it answered my purpose. I wanted to tell the two young men's fortunes first, but the owner of the flashlight deemed it his privilege that I start with him. Peering at his extended palm, I reeled off all that came to my mind. He was insatiable and kept me talking. When I ran short of ideas, I pointed to a freckle on his palm and said, "I see two wives."

"Right!" said he, with admiration for my occult powers. "What do you think, folks, I am a widower and engaged to be married again."

The others could hardly wait for their turn. I examined the lines and marks in the palm of the officer's wife and told her that her husband was far away among friends, thinking anxiously about her. She wept, and I felt like a criminal.

The young man named Stefan extended a long, narrow hand. I noticed small calluses on the tips of his fingers. So he was a violinist. In an impressive manner, I whispered, "You are an artist by nature. You love music. I believe I see you with an instrument in your hands." He started slightly. "But," I continued, "your mind is on other things now. You are thinking

of a long journey. My advice is, don't go. You won't reach your goal. Too many dangers on the way." He glanced at his friend. "Change your plans, is my advice. Turn back at once. The road to the south is closed."

To Stanislaw, the other one, I continued in the same vein, adding, "Your tongue will be your undoing unless you learn to curb it. Talk less. You give yourself away too easily."

After that the two young men huddled in their corner, morose and silent. Fine, they had taken my hint.

We got to Cracow after midnight. Stefan and Stanislaw helped me with my suitcases and proposed that we wait together since our itinerary was the same. I was glad. It gave me an opportunity to speak to them without witnesses.

A Polish railroad man told us that our train would leave at three in the morning, and, having noticed that my teeth were chattering from the cold, he said, "Your train starts from here. Although we are not allowed to admit passengers till half an hour before the departure, I'll let you get on. Come along."

He led us across unlit tracks and, after a rapid look, opened the door of an old third-class coach with a passkey.

"Quick, get in! But keep quiet, and don't light any matches."

I turned to my two companions and reproached them for their lack of caution.

"Why do you say that?" asked Stanislaw. "We didn't say anything."

"Every word was a confession! You said that you weren't trading in anything and that you were going to see some relatives. Even a child knows that no one travels today unless he has, so to speak, his back to the wall."

They laughed. "Yes, that describes our position to a T. We escaped from prison just a day before we were to be executed."

"Hush! For heaven's sake, don't tell me. You don't know who I may be. Of course your intention is to slip across the border somewhere near Zakopane, isn't it?"

"That's right, but how—?"

"Never mind! I just want you to know that the road is closed. Every yard of the border is watched, and they have

specially trained police dogs. Hundreds have been arrested within the last month. You won't get through, so go back home and stay there."

"That's out of the question. They'll arrest us the moment we get back."

We sat thinking. Then Stanislaw said, "How about going from here to the Russian-occupied section? Maybe it wouldn't be so hard to make one's way from there into Hungary. From Hungary it is plain sailing. We'll be with the Allies in no time."

We considered the plan. Stefan, who had spent a summer in the region where the new frontier ran, reviewed, one by one, the villages he remembered. When he mentioned the village of Sokolki, I jumped with excitement.

"I have it! I see a way for you to slip through. Go to Sokolki and try to find some Methodists. When you come across one, tell him that you are members of our Warsaw congregation, that you are sent by the pastor's wife. Ask him to help you. You won't be disappointed."

They repeated Methodists, Methodists, several times, trying to remember the strange word they were hearing for the first time. But then a thought struck me.

"What will you say if the Communists catch you? They watch that border like hawks. My cousin George was arrested by them when he was crossing, and they sent him to a concentration camp in Siberia."

"That's easy," said Stefan. "We'll tell them we are mechanics, and Communists."

"You make me impatient," I exclaimed. "How will you prove your statement? You don't speak like Communists, and you don't even know the Communist salute I bet."

Trying to remember all I had heard in discussions with a Communist friend, I gave them a lesson in Communist phraseology. Again and again I made them repeat the slogans, the mottoes, the shibboleths—till they could reel them off.

At the Lipki station, where I had to change trains again, I said goodbye to my brand-new Communists and got off. They

continued eastward. The thought struck me that although we had talked for several hours about matters of life and death, we did not know each other's surnames or faces. I had no hopes of learning the outcome of that episode. But five months later, in Warsaw, a man came up to me and said, "Are you Mrs. Warfield, the pastor's wife?"

"I am Mrs. Warfield."

"I have a message for you. Stefan and Stanislaw thank you and send you their greetings. They got across safely and according to plan."

March, April, May 1940

by GAITHER

EVERY day brought into my office new destitute, frightened, and heartbroken people. Some were Methodists deported from the western part of Poland; others, strangers, seeking help and advice. One morning there came a woman who, after a quick greeting nervously handed me a slip of paper, and said, "Can you tell me what this is?"

"It looks like English money. Twenty pounds."

"Is it possible!" she exclaimed.

"Where did you get it?" I asked. English currency was scarce in Poland.

"I found it."

"Why did you bring it here to me? You don't even know me."

"A friend of mine said that you would help me."

"Will you give me the name of that friend?"

She hesitated. "Well, really, it wasn't, properly speaking, a friend. Just someone I met in a store on Marszalkowska Street."

My caution was aroused, and I spoke guardedly. "It would

be best for you to take this money to a bank for exchange."

"But the bank will give me the official rate of exchange, which is only a tenth of what I could get in the black market. Won't you exchange it for me? I think we can come to a satisfactory agreement."

"No, thank you!" I was firm. "I am a pastor, not a banker."

The woman played her part to the last. "I'm so disappointed. I had thought you would help me."

She had not deceived me. She was a stool pigeon sent to trap me. The mere possession of foreign currency under the German law meant imprisonment, almost certain death.

I was approached by another agent. He was a man who had lived in Warsaw for some time, and I had met him fleetingly several times during 1939, before the outbreak of war. He was an Englishman. British subjects had been put under arrest or interned long ago, but he explained that he had been let alone on account of his age. After a short preliminary conversation, he lowered his voice and whispered to me, "Warfield, I'll speak frankly. I have been sent to sound you out. Would you be interested in helping a group that is publishing an underground paper?"

I was taken aback, and he continued, "You, as an American citizen, have a radio, and it would be up to you to supply us with the daily news as it comes over the BBC."

The idea appealed to me, and I felt like accepting. On second thought, though, I decided to think it over.

"Let me sleep on it, will you?" I said. "I'll let you know tomorrow."

As soon as he had gone Hania burst into the room. Quite unashamedly she admitted to having listened to our conversation from the living room. This was something new, but I was even more surprised when she burst out violently, "You can't do it, Gates. I don't trust the man. I've never liked him, and I felt it in my bones that he was going to propose something fishy when he came in here tonight."

She drew my attention to details that really were suspicious.

The next day I told him I could not collaborate with his group. Later certain events proved that my decision had been wise.

The western part of Poland, which in October, 1939, had been incorporated into the Reich, was completely separated from our part of Poland, the General Gouvernement, by a well-guarded border. The Methodist church had several congregations in that part. Those of our preachers who were left there were sending in appalling and heartbreaking news. I was increasingly anxious to visit them. They wrote that in many localities our chapels had been closed. In others, services had to be in German, and the pastors struggled to memorize sermons and prayers in the unfamiliar language. In only two places was Polish still used, but we knew it was a temporary privilege. It was urgent to put the parishes under the supervision and, we hoped, protection of a German Methodist superintendent.

I applied to the passport authorities for permission to leave the General Gouvernement and to travel in the German-annexed territory. The headquarters of the *Pass-Stelle* (passport office) were in Cracow, but papers had first to go through a number of local bureaus and offices, including the Warsaw *Pass-Stelle*, which was in the building of the former Conservatory of Music.

On a bitterly cold March day, with the wind whipping drifts of snow along the pavements, I joined a line of some forty shivering people in front of the building. From time to time a Polish policeman posted at the door let one person out, and one of the waiting ones in. I calculated that at the rate our line was moving it would take me several days to get inside. As I deliberated what to do, I saw a newcomer stride up to the entrance. He had a booklet in his hand that looked like a foreign passport, and he said something in German in a loud voice. Immediately the policeman stepped aside to allow him to walk in.

Promptly I drew out my own passport and, as vigorously as numbed legs permitted, hurried to the gate and shouted

"Gangway!" in English. The policeman fell meekly back, and I found myself in the hall.

Here another crowd was waiting. People were straining towards a door where three policemen were posted. Jabbing with my elbows right and left, waving my passport, and repeating "Gangway," I pushed my way through the throng. It worked again. I passed into the inner sanctum.

The clerk to whom I explained what I wanted led me to a larger room, where a German was talking to some foreign-looking people. He was a short, round-shouldered fellow, with a thin mouth and slithering eyes. His name was Ohlmann. During the many visits that I had to make to this office in the following years, I found out that he was even meaner than he looked.

After a preliminary survey of my case, he passed me on to his chief, the chubby, bespectacled Dr. Koch, who received me wreathed in smiles and exuding good will. I had no one to interpret for me, and I sweated as I tried to put into German what I had to say. Every time I attempted to speak Polish, he said he did not understand. Later I learned that he spoke excellent Polish and that he had been the only press photographer in prewar Poland permitted to take pictures of the C.O.P. (*Centralny Okreg Przemyslowy*)—the new industrial center under construction before the war in the district of Sandomierz. It had been closely guarded, for it was the heart of the budding Polish war industry.

After weeks of shuttling from office to office, I received permission for my visits. My first point was the city of Poznan. Having lived there at two different periods, I had many friends and acquaintances among the local people. Pastor Naumiuk, who had charge of the congregation, met me at the station. Before I had time to open my mouth in greeting, he pressed a warning forefinger to his lips, and whispered in English, "Don't speak Polish!"

He pointed to a large inscription posted in a prominent place: "*Hier wird Deutsch gesprochen.*" ("German is spoken here.")

We walked towards the streetcar in almost complete silence. His English was as poor as my German, and neither of us wanted to speak German in any case. The trolley bore inscriptions like the one in the station. When we had got off and entered a side street, I whispered, "What would happen if I spoke Polish?"

"We'd be beaten black and blue, jailed, maybe killed."

I didn't speak another word until we found ourselves inside the tiny, two-room attic apartment where the Naumiiks were now living. After looking through the keyhole to make sure that no one had followed us, Pastor Naumiuk relaxed.

He gave me a report of his work since the outbreak of war. Little was left of our thriving congregation: more than 200,000 Poles had been deported from the city (many of our Methodists were among them), and those remaining had been robbed of their homes, offices, stores, furniture, clothes—all their possessions. Thousands had been shot. Thousands of the deported were sent to Germany, from where, once in a while, desperate letters came. I told Brother Naumiuk that I wanted to visit those of our members still in the city. He put down addresses on a piece of paper, saying all Poles had been driven off the main streets and were living in hovels on back alleys.

"Besides, I have to give you the old and the new names of streets, as they have all been changed to German and you would not be able to find your way around."

Pastor Naumiuk and his wife had been turned out of four successive homes in two months and had lost everything. Mrs. Naumiuk was limping. During one of the brutal evictions—they usually occurred in the middle of the night—she had been pushed by a soldier who thought she did not move fast enough, and she had fallen down a flight of steps.

Poznan had been the center of truck gardening, and so I asked about the food situation when we sat down to a modest meal.

"There is enough of everything," exclaimed Mrs. Naumiuk, "but it's not for us. We are not allowed to market until after two o'clock, and only for a couple of hours. We are forbidden

to buy such aristocrats of the garden as peas, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and fruit. Those are only for Germans."

"You remember old Mr. Kazimierczak," said Brother Naumiuk. "He got several years' hard labor for buying butter."

That afternoon I set out to visit Professor Hauptmann, with whom I had lived fourteen years ago when I had first come to Poznan. I rang his bell, and a man came to the door.

"Is Professor Hauptmann at home?"

"Who?" asked the stranger. "Never heard the name."

"Professor Hauptmann lived here. Could you give me his present address?"

"Was he a Pole?" asked the man, eyeing me coldly.

"Yes."

"Then of course he doesn't live here now," he barked out, slamming the door in my face.

I went to the home of Roman Szary and his sister—a dank basement room. It had three chairs, an iron bed, and a wooden crate for a table. They were in fear that Roman, who was an experienced electrician, might any day be shipped to an armament factory in Germany.

My next stop was at the home of John Fabis, one of the leading stewards of our church, a man in his sixties. He was a shoemaker by profession, had always taken great pride in his workmanship, and was well-to-do before the war. With tears running down his wrinkled face, he told me how the Germans had come to his store, had called him out of his workshop, and had asked, "Where is your stock? Where are your tools, your money, your keys?"

He showed them. Then he was told, "Put down your pocketbook, your watch, and your keys on the counter, and get out."

The following week he and his wife were driven out of their home too.

Back at the Naumiiks, I heard of the public executions that had taken place in the city in the first months of the invasion.

Pastor Manitius had been shot, as had doctors, lawyers, and university professors whom I had known.

The next day I looked up more friends. The things I saw left me dazed. Poles were scurrying around with lowered heads, and hastily stepping off the pavement, in accordance with the law, whenever they encountered a German in uniform. I saw—next to German shops filled with food and goods of every kind—long lines of Polish people waiting for meager rations in front of almost empty Polish shops. I saw people being deported. A weeping woman was leading a five-year-old girl by the hand. The child wore nothing but a nightgown under her coat; she wore slippers, but no stockings. She was clutching a doll and a little pillow.

Breakfasts were scanty, and one day I went into a bakery where many appetizing rolls, cakes, and cookies were on display. When I asked the buxom girl behind the counter for a bun, she answered, "Where is your card?"

"I have none."

"Are you a German?"

"No."

Her face got hard. She pointed to the door and shouted, "Out of here, you damned Pole!"

From Poznan I set out to visit cities in the Corridor. First, I went to Grudziadz, where we had had a flourishing congregation. This one, exceptionally, was mixed, consisting of 80 per cent Polish and 20 per cent German members. Our pastor here was Emil Majewski, a man of German descent (despite his Polish name) who spoke fluent Polish. He had always discharged his duties without discriminating between the two national groups in his congregation. Before the war he had not been certain of his political leanings, although he had admitted that various points in the National Socialist program appealed to him. Though doubtful of the reception I would find, I went to his home. In telling me of arrests, deportations, and looting, he tried to make excuses for the behavior of his countrymen, but I could see plainly that he was aghast at their bloody acts. Only a few days prior to my arrival he had been

haled into the police station and reprimanded for visiting his Polish members.

He had defended himself. "I am their pastor, appointed to look after them."

"You can have nothing to do with Poles," he was told. "You know the orders. If you disobey, you'll be sorry." As a warning and punishment for his offense, his family food rations were cut. His wife told me of it with indignation.

I had difficulty in finding those few of our members left in the city. They thought only about hiding. I had come at a time when young women were being arrested in great numbers to be shipped to army brothels and to work in Germany. I left on the second day, taking Sister Isabella, our local deaconess, with me. She had eluded searching parties only by strategy.

Together we went to Bydgoszcz. It was here that "Bloody Sunday," so called by the Germans, had brought vicious revenge. The Germans had made Bydgoszcz a "punitive" city. There was terror in the very air.

In the first days of September, 1939, while the Poles were still making a stand in the West, local Germans of Bydgoszcz had set up machine guns on the roofs of homes and churches and had attacked the retreating Polish Army. But the army had brought the traitors to account before retreating farther east. Then the German Army had come, and the streets flowed with Polish blood. In this city of 140,000 inhabitants, more than 10,000 had been murdered, thousands had been sent to concentration camps, and more thousands had been deported. One hundred or more boys had been caught on the streets—they were Boy Scouts, aged twelve and thirteen—and had been lined up on the steps of the Church of the Jesuits and machine-gunned. Incredibly, they had gone down singing the hymn, "O God, who saved Poland through so many centuries—"

I made a quick trip to Inowroclaw. The only church member I could find there told me of seventy hostages that had been massacred by drunken German officers—"for fun"—in the local prison.

Back in Bydgoszcz, I went to Michael and Lydia's former home, hoping to persuade the present occupants to let me carry away some of their possessions. The furniture of the parsonage belonged to the church, and I thought that on this ground I might be able to claim it. No one was in, which probably was lucky. I later realized that my inquiry, unsubstantiated by a legal document, might have led to unpleasantness and even personal injury. Lydia had given me the name of a neighbor, a Russian woman, from whom I was delighted to learn that she had sneaked out much of Michael and Lydia's china, linen, and clothing. We packed the essential things so that I might take them back to Warsaw with me.

That night I had difficulty in finding quarters. No hotel was open to Poles, and I did not wish to take advantage of my American nationality and go where only Germans were admitted. One of our church members offered to set up a bed for me. The household was in complete disarray, for the police had searched every apartment in the building during the day. In one apartment, an old revolver had been found, and immediately husband and wife (their children, fortunately, were not at home) were taken into an adjacent vacant lot and executed with four others picked up on various pretexts.

I looked up another Methodist couple, whose two daughters had attended the summer camps our church conducted for city children. The girls, aged fifteen and seventeen, had been in hiding. They told me about their schoolmates. Some were in houses of prostitution; some had become diseased and had been killed. One group of these "prostitutes"—their friends—had been thrown into a ditch and blown to pieces with hand grenades; another group, thirty-seven girls, had been gassed in a lethal chamber.

A sharp knock on the door startled us.

"It's the signal. They're coming! Quick!"

The parents stayed in the apartment, and I ran with the girls down a steep flight of steps into a cellar. Overhead we heard the heavy steps of the police. A woman screamed. Then silence. Much later we went back to the apartment. It had not

been a general search. The police had come to make an individual arrest.

I looked up one more family, the Tureks. The parents told me that the son whom I knew so well was a war prisoner; that the other son had been taken to work in a factory near Hamburg. But their daughter, Stephanie, was their greatest sorrow. She was seventeen and pretty. This very day she had been called to the German labor office.

The mother sobbed. "They say it is to work in Germany, but they'll take her to some bawdy house. Pan* Pastor, can't you do something?"

There was only one way of helping, and I tried it. I wrote Stephanie a letter, stating that she was needed as a worker in our church in Warsaw. This subterfuge had been successful before, when I tried it in the General Gouvernement. Several persons, thanks to it, had been released by the *Arbeitsamt* (labor bureau). I hoped it would again. A neighbor who knew German translated and typed the letter for me. I signed it and stamped it with the church seal, which I luckily had with me. Several weeks later Stephanie arrived in Warsaw, safe.

In Torun, Robert Shepherd, an American, met me at the station and took me to his home, which was beset with gloom. Two days before, trucks had driven up to a Polish grammar school, and all the children had been carried away by the police. Parents guessed that their children, like others in previous raids, had been taken to Germany to be raised in private homes and public institutions as Germans.

In the hospital I found a friend at her work—Dr. Danuta Ciazynska, the daughter of the Latineks. She and a small group of other Polish doctors were still alive because their services were needed by the enemy. They pressed around me, begging for news that would give them hope of England's and America's coming to the rescue. Death, torture, and despair was their story. Knowing that their turn would come, they wanted only the assurance that someone would survive, that someone would defeat the Germans.

* *Pan* means Mr. or Sir; *Pani*, Mrs. or Madam.

Few received permission to travel, and the train was almost empty when I boarded it to return to Warsaw. I was alone in my compartment, and in the whole coach there were only five people. The bundles and suitcases I was carrying made me uneasy. There were three bundles for Michael and Lydia Kosmiderski, two fur coats that friends had begged me to take to relatives in Warsaw, and two suitcases so heavy that I wondered what they might contain. Worst of all, innumerable twenty- and fifty-dollar bills pinned to my underwear rustled like dry leaves as I moved. With terror I thought of what would happen if, on the frontier of the General Gouvernement, they were to frisk me. The least consequence would be death. In my nervousness, as we sped towards the border, I could not sit still, but when I walked up and down the corridor I could hear myself rustling. Several times I rearranged my luggage, to make it look as if it belonged to three different passengers.

Although, since the outbreak of war, I had frequently carried, concealed on my person, prohibited items, I had never taken so great a risk as this time. But the money and clothes were a matter of life and death to many persons. Now, however, my nerves were giving way. I feared that my agitation would attract the attention of the police and railroad guards.

As we stopped in Kutno, the border station, it was growing dark. There were no lights on the train, and the dusky inside of my compartment provided one comfortable thought: anyone coming from the brightly lit platform would find it very dark.

When the guards came to my compartment door, I jumped up and thrust out my passport and my permission to travel. They turned their flashlights full upon me, and I concentrated all the will power I possessed on keeping my hands steady. The light switched to the documents, then back to my face, then towards the baggage rack. The guards mumbled something and moved on. When they had gone, I lay down. My heart pounded violently, and I felt nauseated. A sharp pain shot through my chest, and for the first time in my life I had an acute heart attack. While I waited for my pulse to quiet down

and the tremor to subside, I promised myself never again to smuggle anything.

My next trip, a week later, took me to Katowice. The city was changed. Every street had been renamed, and all the bustle and life of this capital of Polish Upper Silesia had deserted it. Pastor and Mrs. Najder were still in their home. They were still able to hold services in Polish, although many church members had been deported. Brother Najder and I set out to the near-by city of Sosnowiec to look up some Methodists there. On the streetcar, posters warned us not to speak Polish. The car was filled, but no one talked. For half an hour we traveled in complete silence. Suddenly all the passengers began to talk simultaneously. The little stream we had just crossed formed the boundary line between the Reich and the General Gouvernement. Here one was allowed to speak Polish.

Sosnowiec was crowded with Jews. All the Jews living in Katowice and neighboring towns had been expelled and brought here. Though they were still permitted to move freely in this city, there had been reprisals against them. I saw the ruins of a synagogue where three hundred had been locked up and burned to death.

Shortly after my return to Warsaw, Polish services in Katowice were prohibited. Najder was arrested, kept in prison for a few days, then deported to the General Gouvernement. His wife was not allowed to follow him. It took many months and numerous appeals to authorities before we obtained permission for her to move to Cracow, where her husband had settled.

For some time Ruth Lawrence and I had been urging Ellen Newby to return to the United States. Because of restrictions imposed on our church work, and because her family wrote insistently, demanding her return, she yielded to pleas and left. Ruth, against my advice, stayed on in Warsaw.

Beginning with the first months of 1940, large numbers of Jews were brought daily from the Reich, Austria, and the Polish territories that Germany had annexed. Thousands were

machine-gunned immediately. Others were left to fend for themselves. Among those who arrived from Lodz came two Christian missionaries of Jewish origin—Pastor Jacob Berkowitz and Pastor Sommer—and their families. They had worked among the Jews in Lodz. First they were arrested, then deported. Pastor Berkowitz and his wife were fairly lucky. They had lost almost all they owned, but were spared imprisonment and ill treatment. But Pastor Sommer had undergone torture. He and his wife had been kept in a prison camp, separated from one another. Beatings and kicking had damaged his lungs. He died soon after their arrival in Warsaw, and I buried him.

The year 1940 had brought an increase in terror. With many others, I had hoped that after the first heat of invasion had subsided, the reign of terror would diminish. But arrests and executions occurred more and more. Men of all walks of life were taken—teachers, lawyers, doctors, judges, businessmen, the Roman Catholic clergy, and my Protestant colleagues. Seventy-nine-year-old Bishop Julius Bursche, Superintendent of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and his brother, Professor Edmund Bursche, of the Protestant faculty of the University of Warsaw, had been among the prominent Protestants arrested shortly after the downfall of Warsaw. They were kept in the Pawiak prison. When Himmler came to Warsaw, on a tour of inspection, he ordered a roll call of all prisoners. The men were lined up in the yard. Himmler glanced at the names on the list handed him and then ordered both Bishop and Professor Bursche to step forward.

"Your name is German. Did your family come from Germany originally?"

They answered in the affirmative.

"And what are you? Germans or Poles?"

"We are Poles."

Himmler struck them in the face, again and again, until they fell to the ground. Soon after that they were taken to concentration camps in Germany.

Pastor Karol Kulisz, a Senior of the Polish Lutheran Church, had also been arrested and taken to a concentration camp. He

was well over seventy. Through his brother-in-law, Reverend Edmund Chambers, who was one of my Methodist colleagues, I knew that Kulisz had never engaged in any political activity. He was a man of great erudition and integrity.

House-to-house searches multiplied. As a rule they were made at night. A street picked out for a search would be surrounded by machine guns and troops, while searchlights on army trucks illuminated the scene. The Gestapo went from house to house, floor to floor, apartment to apartment, dragging out men and women by force. Young men and women were rounded up for labor in Germany, and hardly a day went by that several did not come to seek shelter in our home.

The American Consulate had issued affidavits to all United States citizens stating that they were under the protection of the United States Government. Large red seals were affixed to these documents, and we were instructed to paste them in a visible place on our apartment doors so that we would be spared in case a searching party came to our building. But even this shield of immunity did not give us a feeling of safety. Although we were not free of fear anywhere, the home seemed more dangerous than any other place.

Professor Janowski was arrested on a charge of theft. Though nothing could surprise me by now, I wondered how such an accusation could have been brought against a man of his character. I found out. No sooner had the victorious Wehrmacht occupied Poland than commissions of German professors, doctors, and scientists came into the country. In the years preceding the war these men had kept in close contact with their Polish colleagues. Even as late as the spring of 1939 they had come to meetings, congresses, and banquets. They were acquainted with every museum, library, and research laboratory. Now they came to help in the looting. There were well-known names among them—Drs. Joseph Muhlmann, Karl Kraus, Ernest Petersen, Dagobert Frey. The Poles, in an attempt to save the national property, had hidden some of the treasures of art and learning. Janowski had been reported.

Late in the spring I heard that Matthew Rataj, former

speaker of the Polish Parliament and leader of the Peasant Party, had been tortured to death. A spate of executions of former Polish leaders followed. The number of black-rimmed death notices posted on church walls increased.

Ever since my trip to the incorporated territories, I had been corresponding with a German Methodist minister—Pastor Schmidt—who was to take charge of our congregations as district superintendent. He wrote that he would like to discuss details with me but could not obtain permission to enter the General Gouvernement, and as my traveling permit was still valid he suggested that I meet him in Lodz, now renamed Litzmannstadt.

In prewar times Lodz could be reached by train in two or three hours from Warsaw. Now it took a whole day. At the dividing line between the General Gouvernement and the Reich, I underwent two strict searches. I arrived in the evening, and went to look for a room, but the city was full of military men, and I wound up at the local quartermaster's office, where I was given the address of a second-rate hotel. My room turned out to be small, uncomfortable, and already occupied by a German civilian. I was too tired to mind sharing it with anyone, and sat down to eat the sandwiches of black bread and marmalade that our maid had put in my bag. My fellow lodger appeared. He was a businessman from Saxony—and inclined to be cordial. Although my scanty German did not permit a flow of conversation, I did make out that he was excited about the unlimited business possibilities that Germany's conquests were opening up to her citizens. He was flushed with the victories in the West, the expansion to the East.

I dislike beer, but accepted his invitation to accompany him to the restaurant downstairs, because I wished to see and hear as much as possible. The restaurant was full of soldiers. They sang and shouted, and pinched their shrill, overpainted women companions. I left my acquaintance slurping at his enormous stein, probably dreaming of riches and victories.

Superintendent Schmidt also reflected the optimism that pervaded Germany. We had dinner at the best hotel in the city.

For the Germans at least, the food was not rationed in Lodz at this time, and we were served an excellent meal. I did not enjoy my food. I had seen gallows in the town, and knew they were continuously used. I remembered Robert Geyer, President of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and Guido John, owner of a large metallurgical establishment, who, like many others, had been shot for refusing to sign their names on the *Volksdeutsche* list. I remembered the village of Piatek near by, where so recently the entire male population had been put to death because some children playing in the market square had taken off the wheel of a German-owned cart.

That morning I had skirted the barbed-wire enclosure of the ghetto. It was the first in Poland, and I knew that the imprisoned people lived there under incredible hardships. Superintendent Schmidt asked me if I had been inside, then proceeded to give me an account of the tour he had been permitted to make. Not once did I detect in his words or tone a trace of pity for the victims or a shadow of indignation at the crimes perpetrated. Like most of the Germans with whom I talked, he seemed to feel that the treatment of Jews and Poles was a just and deserved punishment.

Superintendent Schmidt accompanied me to the railroad station. I left him at a newspaper stand and went to get my return ticket. The clerk, whom I addressed in Polish, went on sorting tickets as if he hadn't heard me. I waited, then repeated what I had said. I got no answer. My companion came up, took in the situation, got red in the face. He banged his fist on the ledge and shouted in German, "Come here at once!"

The ticket agent jumped and sprang towards us.

"A ticket for my friend to Warsaw. You heard him."

"Where is your traveling permit?" asked the agent, looking at me with a mixture of hatred and submission.

Superintendent Schmidt's face grew purple. He bellowed. "A ticket, and don't let me hear another word from you. My friend doesn't need a permit."

I had a ticket immediately. Schmidt rumbled, "These officials are becoming impossible. You never get service unless you shout at them."

I smiled ruefully, thinking what the results would have been had I raised my voice against a representative of the Master Race.

At my door I was met by a frightened Janka. She let me in, but whispered a warning, "Sh! The Germans are at the Grossmans."

The Grossmans, who were well-to-do, had a nicely furnished apartment on the floor below. There were heavy steps, a man was talking in a booming voice, and furniture was being shifted. When all was quiet, I went down. Grossman admitted me.

"They came in a van. An officer and some privates. The officer picked out the best pieces. He took Mother's portrait. He saw my fountain pen lying on the desk, and he made me fill it before pocketing it!"

That night, after curfew, I helped him pack a steamer trunk with what valuables they still had. We carried it up to our apartment to hide it until a better place could be found.

Every day one could see moving vans standing in front of houses. The looting of furniture and household goods was done openly and in accordance with German law. Whatever property the Poles owned could be confiscated at will, and in many sections of the country it automatically became the property of the Reich.

Not having heard from my old friend Jacob Regierer for several weeks, I went to see him. He opened the door. His servants, who were Christians, had been discharged, because it was illegal for a Jew to employ non-Jewish help.

He was giggling nervously, and it was some time before he could speak coherently.

"About an hour ago my doorbell rang, and a German officer with several orderlies marched in. He had come to look over my furniture, he said. He went first into the drawing room. He liked the piano, but it was too large for his place. In one room after another, he picked out the best pieces, and he had

them all piled in the middle of the drawing room. The men were told to carry them out. Suddenly he looked at me. His expression frightened me. He asked, 'What is your name?' I told him. 'Have you ever been in Berlin? Do you have relatives there?' I hadn't and told him so. He shouted loudly to his men, 'Come here!' I thought he meant to execute me right then and there, but he said he wouldn't take any of my things, then asked his men, 'What is the next number?' The answer was Polna Street. He told them to drive the van over there, and he would follow right away."

Regierer opened the door of his drawing room. In the middle of the large chamber was a heap of rugs, hangings, bedding, fur coats, and furniture.

"When the men were gone, the officer sat down and even asked me to sit down too, very politely. He offered me a smoke. He told me that years ago, as a poor student, he was living in Berlin. He had no money and thought he had to give up his dream of getting a university degree. Then he met a businessman, a Jew, who befriended him, took him into his home, treated him like a son, and set him up in his profession. When the benefactor died, he left the young man a considerable sum of money.

"'You look like my benefactor,' the officer said. 'I couldn't take your things. Here is my card. I don't rank very high, but I have a few friends, and if you ever get into trouble, let me know.' He said to remember that there was one German who had not forgotten the kindness of a Jew. It's like a dream."

It certainly was like a dream. We all had forgotten that Germans could show mercy, gratitude, or any other human feelings.

May 1940

by *HANIA*

IN BORY I found Mother ill, Father not feeling well (he had aged, and every effort seemed to tire him), Mimi grown considerably taller, and Christine, who for the first time in her life was doing housework, with two bandaged fingers. Mimi, in her little dresses lengthened with strips of odd material, looked like *Orphan Annie*.

The house, with the paint chipped and no curtains in the windows—soap was too scarce to waste on trimmings—had acquired an air of poverty. Those rooms that had not been heated showed damp patches on the ceilings, and the wall paper was discolored.

Though the hills and the river looked the same, there were many changes in the village. The mayor, several aldermen, two teachers, and a number of peasants had been arrested. The schoolhouse was full of soldiers.

But we could not allow ourselves gloomy thoughts and despair. The season was well advanced, and it was high time to start the garden.

How rapturously we had greeted the spring in former years! How dearly we had prized the first burst of bloom, the first scents! Now all our conversations and dreamings revolved around plowing, seeds, and manure. Nothing could be bought in stores. Getting supplies meant tramping for miles from farm to farm, bartering and haggling. Day after day I dragged myself home, with no potatoes for planting, no manure, no fertilizer. One evening Lola dashed in, glowing with news. “Hania! I know where we can get manure!”

“Where? Tell me!”

“I won’t tell you. You are sure to go and tell a dozen other people, and then there’ll be a run on the dung heap. Be at my house tomorrow before seven.”

The morning was beautiful, and it was like old times as we walked up the valley along the babbling stream. When we

came to Mala Polana, a settlement of peasant homes and summer boarding houses, she pointed to the Railroad Workmen's Sanitarium, over which floated a large German flag. It was the headquarters of the *Grenzschutzpolizei* (frontier police).

"Oh, Lola, not in there? I won't go!"

"Don't be a goose! They have horses and cows, and unless we get manure we'll starve next winter."

The police dogs used for patrolling the border were kept in a shack in the yard. They barked furiously at us. I drew back in a panic, but Lola firmly propelled me forward.

A sergeant seated behind a large desk drawled benevolently, "Ah, come in, come in!"

Lola gave me a nudge. "Look pleasant! Smile! Ask him!" I did as I was told.

The sergeant scratched his head with a penholder. "There are *Volksdeutsche* in the community who probably could use some too. They should have first choice. But since you two have come on foot so many miles, I'll let you have it."

We paid him and made our way back, walking on clouds. "Lola," I said, "I think you would not have told even me if it hadn't been that you needed an interpreter."

She laughed loudly. "You are right. In these times it is hard to remember any but one's closest."

Her frankness shocked me, but I had to admit I would have done the same. Ideals of brotherly love and unselfishness are hard to hold on to when it comes to a matter of survival.

For the price of a pair of trousers and two pairs of socks, our neighbor Stypula agreed to plow the field and garden. He had to come on a Sunday, for he, his two sons, and their team of horses, had been drafted by the Germans, and were working all week hauling logs.

While Father looked after Mimi and Mother, and Christine did kitchen duty, I raked and sowed. When we finally obtained some potatoes for planting, we hired two old women (price: two perfectly good blouses), and I helped them plant. It nettled me to see them shrugging doubtfully when I set out with them for the field.

In my left hand I carried a large basket of potatoes, and with the right I dipped into it, stooped, dropped them in a furrow, and advanced. I would show the women that I was as good as they were. Dip, stoop, dip, stoop.

In one place the ground was wet and soggy, and my shoe got stuck. I pulled, and my foot came out and went plunk into the mud, ankle deep. I put on my shoe again, but the wet clay on my stocking felt awful. It happened again. The bare-footed women watched me and giggled. So I stripped off the wet stockings and shoes. The ground seemed very cold and rough on my bare feet, and I found it hard to keep pace with the others. Soon I was so tired that I no longer cared what they thought. My back felt broken, and all my muscles ached. But when the field was planted, I forgot my weariness. We had planted the contents of two large sacks. I figured that if each potato yielded nine potatoes, we'd have eighteen sacks. Twelve would be sufficient to carry us through the year. There would be six left, which we could trade for grain or milk.

The world was a beautiful place as, with my hoe over my shoulder and my shoes and stockings in my hands, I ran home happy as a lark.

Mimi was waiting at the garden gate. I wanted to kiss her, but she pushed me away, wrinkling her nose. "Mummy, you look like a gypsy."

We needed onion sets, and New Market offered the only hope of finding them. I took the train at five in the morning. The shop windows had large placards, decorated with greens and swastikas. They read: "Thank you, Fuehrer." Most of the shops were owned by Jews, and it was hard to imagine what they could be thanking the Fuehrer for. I walked into a shop where I had often traded and, seeing a strange woman behind the counter, asked, "Where is Mr. Reich?"

The answer was, "I don't know where that Jew is, and I don't care. This shop is ours, and it's only for Germans. Get going before I call the police."

Onion sets could not be found, so I made a call on Anda Piatek. She was darning socks and stockings. Her daughter Eva

and a three-year-old girl were playing with blocks. The children were very quiet. The living room looked unfamiliar. Anda said indifferently, "I had to sell a few things. Others were taken when the police made a search here last month."

The Germans had designated New Market as another punitive area, and the town was living in terror. Every day many were arrested and taken to concentration camps. No one was allowed on the streets after eight, so that the inhabitants, forced to stay at home, could be more easily picked up by the police. The little girl playing with Eva was the grandchild of the Wajdas, who lived in the large white house across the street. The child's father was missing with his two brothers. Her paternal grandparents had been arrested, released a week later, and taken again, and then her mother, two unmarried aunts, and the maid were taken too. The child had been left locked up in the house, and Wladek (Anda's husband) had had to break in through a window to rescue her. No one could tell what charges had been preferred against the Wajda family.

Anda told me about her cousin Pauline. I knew this cousin. She was an elderly spinster, small, mousy, and genteel. Her income had been modest, and she had eked out her living by taking in boarders. One of them, a civil engineer, had been drafted when the war broke out. He had asked Pauline to keep his belongings for him, expecting some day to return. Pauline had locked up his room.

Ten days ago, during one of the searches that combed the city, the Gestapo had come to her house. They made her unlock the boarder's room, and asked what she had in the trunk.

"I don't know. It isn't mine. A man who used to live here left it when he was drafted. I don't even have the key."

They broke the lock and dumped the contents on the floor. Among various objects was a 1914-model Austrian gun.

"So you are concealing weapons!" roared the officer. "Take her away!"

She was dragged to the garden. Between the lilac and the rosebushes, they shot her down.

When I came back from New Market, I found Marysia, our new maid, in tears. (Kasia had gone to look after the farm after her brother Franek's arrest.) Marysia was just over twenty, strong and good-natured, and invaluable in garden work.

In the morning a German commission had come to the town hall and announced that whereas Polish people were not voluntarily responding to the appeal to go as farm labor to Germany, they would be drafted. Men and women from the age of sixteen up were subject to that law. They had posted a list of names, and Marysia's was among the first.

A few days later, Marysia's group of boys and girls was brought to the station under police escort. They huddled together like frightened sheep, while soldiers guarded them with guns and bayonets. Christine and I, who had come to say goodbye to Marysia, carried a gift of food, but the guards would not let us go near. A crowd of villagers, relatives of the draftees, were standing motionless and somber at a little distance. The drafted boys were packed in a boxcar and locked in. The frightened girls tried to put up a resistance. They screamed and fought, and the soldiers had to drag them by force.

"Thank the Lord, Marysia is so plain," said Christine. "Maybe they'll really use her only for farm work."

Helga, who had also come to look at the deportees, said to us as we passed her, "These silly geese. How they carry on! They should be grateful. It will do them good to see the world."

We did not answer.

Christine and I stopped at the Wolanskis. The father of this big family—there were seven children—was a railroad mechanic. He and his wife were respected in Bory for their industry and integrity.

"We've been to the station," I said. "I see they didn't get Irena. How did you manage?"

"When the health commissioner came to look the girls over, I sent Vera in to him," Mrs. Wolanska explained. "She's a year younger—only fifteen—and sickly. When the German

doctor examined Vera, he found her too weak to be of any use, and he struck Irena's name off the list. He said maybe next year she would be stronger. What would have happened if someone had told the Germans of the substitution? I was afraid Wieckowa would see her!"

"Mrs. Wolanska, will you let Irena work for us?"

"Gladly, even if you can't pay her. Food means much more than money. We're starving. What my man gets at the railroad shops isn't enough to keep us in potatoes."

Wieckowa, whom Mrs. Wolanska feared, was the same woman who, in September, 1939, had told the Germans of my having Grünberg's radio. Now that her husband was dead, she had reverted to her maiden name of Schmaltz and had signed up as a *Volksdeutsche*. Used by the Gestapo as an informer, she was dreaded by all and despised even by the Germans. Paradoxically, it was Father who had been instrumental in helping her acquire her German papers. She had come into our kitchen one day, about a week after her husband's burial. With an obsequious smile on her flat face, she had asked Father, "Pan Doktor, you have a typewriter, and you write German so well, will you write a petition for me?"

"What sort of petition?"

"I'm a German by blood, and now that my man is gone I want to get my papers."

Father was furious, but Mother and I took him aside.

"Don't refuse her. She is as deadly as a rattler. Besides, how can we stop her from being a German if she is one," argued Mother.

"Yes, do write it," I said, "but let her pay for it."

I told her she could have her petition for a pound of sugar—an item which by then was accessible only to the Master Race. She paid. When I passed her a week later she was wearing a new purple skirt and red woolen shawl. She didn't return my greeting; she had been accepted into Hitler's bosom.

The mayor had been in jail for six weeks when his wife came to see us. "I've tried everything. I've bribed and paid

until there is nothing left. If you don't help, he'll be lost. One of the prison guards told me that within two weeks a convoy of prisoners will be shipped to Oswiecim. They are sure to send John."

"But what can I do?" said Father.

"You know Mr. Werle. Maybe you could get him to plead with the chief of the Gestapo."

Father was doubtful. We all knew the various members of the New Market Gestapo by reputation. Each one had his special predilection in bribes. One took only mink coats; another, gold; a third, Oriental rugs. Their chief took only diamonds. But the mayor's wife had no diamonds. However, Father managed to persuade Werle to intercede. A few days later the mayor was released.

He not only came back but resumed his duties. We heard that he had wanted to resign, but the Germans would not let him. I noticed he had changed from a still young, husky fellow to an old man.

"How were you treated?" I asked him.

"Very well," he said looking at the floor.

"Did you have enough to eat? They say that in the New Market jail the prisoners are starved for days on end."

"We had enough food, and it was excellent."

"You must be joking!" I exclaimed.

He did not answer.

Instead of the prayerfully awaited Allied offensive, the spring season brought one German victory after another. Holland had fallen, then Belgium. Now France was tottering.

We worked with frenzy in the garden, in the house, at everything and anything, just to keep from thinking. There had been no news from Joe for a long time. Had he joined the Polish forces in France? Had he been at Sedan, at Dunkirk? Where was Taddeus, Christine's brother? Were they still alive? At night I could hear Mother wandering through the empty rooms. Praying, probably.

Very strict laws had been passed, separating the Germans

from us. Not only Poles but also Germans who broke the laws were punished. Rudolph Gottlieb still came from time to time, but always late in the evening. He still tried to convert us to National Socialism. We, on our side, spared no effort to prove the fallacy of his views. He was not a bad man at heart (at that very time, with his knowledge and complicity, we were harboring a Jewish friend), and we noted with satisfaction that we made an impression.

But one day he came in a victorious mood. He was under the spell of the oratory of the Fuehrer, who had just spoken over the radio.

"The world is ours," he said. "All that's left now is the mopping up of the continent. We'll be in London in a fortnight. By fall, America will be eating out of our hand." He described packages that had been prepared for Britain's population—canned goods, bread, tobacco. "As we march into London, we'll shower the people with these gifts. Let them see that we are not barbarians."

"First a few loaves of bread, then concentration camps, execution squads, gallows," I said sardonically. "We ought to know. But the war isn't over yet."

He answered slowly. "I understand how you feel. Now that I have come to know the Poles I understand your tragedy. But I don't know what's better for Poland—that we should lose or that we should win. We have our orders: If we have to retreat from here, Poland is to be drowned in her own blood."

I began to cry.

"I didn't want to hurt you. It may be best for you to know the truth. These are orders. Regardless of what I myself will do, there will be millions who'll carry them out."

Every few weeks new contingents of labor were taken from our village. One Sunday the church was surrounded, and people were taken as they came out after the service. Often the soldiers came to the houses by night. To elude them, girls and boys began to sleep in the woods and hills. When the fugitives could not be found, other members of the

family were beaten and arrested. But man power was not the only thing that was wanted. Special commissions raked the region to tabulate and evaluate horses, cows, sheep, pigs, and chickens. This was the food reserve from which the Wehrmacht could draw at will. Few peasants had more than eight or ten chickens left. The improperly fed hens laid poorly, but it was decreed that for every registered hen the owner would have to turn in an egg a day.

This provoked a New Market farmer to string up a dead chicken on a pole in the market square, with a legend reading, "I'm committing suicide because I cannot lay 366 eggs a year." We thought it a good joke. Not so the Germans. In retaliation the town was surrounded by a cordon of police, and for four weeks no food was allowed to be brought in.

Mrs. Mirska, who lived next door to Anda, braved curfew laws every night to procure a quart of milk for her six-month-old child. For about a mile she crawled on hands and knees to a thicket where a peasant woman hid the milk for her.

The new food laws made the outlook for the fall very dark. We were in hopes that the six roosters we were raising (they had been bought in various stages of emaciation from peasants) would some day be fit for the table. But fats were a worse problem. Lola thought up a plan for us: buy a pig. She promised to help us find one.

"But if we register it, they won't let us butcher it."

"Maybe the war will be over by then."

"But isn't it hard to feed a pig?"

"Nonsense! A pig eats anything. It needs little else than greens, and you have all the necessary grass and weeds in your garden." It sounded easy.

"We have no pen. Where shall we put him?"

"Anywhere."

"Lola, but where? He can't sleep in the doghouse. Abdulla won't stand for it. And we can't keep him in the kitchen."

"You have a tool shed, don't you?" she asked.

When Gaither came to be with us for a few days, we combed the hills for a hog. Our search was shrouded in

mystery, and we went to all lengths to conceal, from friend and foe alike, the purpose of our hikes. We found a shoat that answered to the specifications set down by Lola. It was of the right age and of the right shape: square and broad, with a thick short snout and drooping ears. For 400 zlotys (the price of a good horse before the war) and a man's shirt, we bought him. Under cover of night he was delivered through the back fence.

All day long one of the household could be seen hanging over the picket fence that surrounded the shed. We watched the pig root, roll, eat, drink, and bask in the sun. He had merry little eyes, and to Mimi's delight he answered with expressive grunts when we spoke to him. He soon became a great pet, and we named him Casper.

But Casper disappointed us in one respect. He not only refused to grow plump on weeds alone, but even would not eat them at all. After earnest and secret inquiries among the farmers of our acquaintance, we learned that he would have to have potatoes and bran. Our life became a misery. Day after day I made the rounds, calling on peasants and millers, to trade clothes for feed. In this struggle I grew thin, but Casper, blissfully unaware of his hand-to-mouth existence, grew heavier by the hour.

I was hoeing the garden one morning when Mimi ran up from the house.

"Mummy, Mummy. A guest!"

"Who is it, darling?"

"I don't know. She looks like Aunt Anda, but different. Kind of thin and pale. Eva's mamma wasn't that way." She darted off after a butterfly, singing, "And her nose is red from crying, red from crying—"

I threw down the hoe and ran to the house. Father and Mother were talking with Anda. "It's Wladek," said Father.

"Arrested?" I asked.

"They came in the night; told him to get dressed. When he asked what he was wanted for, they knocked him down. I know he's hungry, but they won't let me send him food."

"I know," I said. "Not for the first week or so."

Some of our friends who had so hastily departed in August before the outbreak of war were coming back. One afternoon I caught up with three people walking from the station. The two women were carrying small bundles wrapped in paper, the man was carrying a wicker basket and a roll of blankets. They looked bedraggled; the older woman limped.

"Hania!" They were Mr. and Mrs. Dolinski and Stenia, their daughter.

"Deported?" I cried.

"Yes."

"And where is George?" He was sixteen, too young for military service.

"We don't know," said Stenia. "He went out one day to buy something and never came back. That day there was a man hunt on the streets. Hundreds were taken."

"He may have written us," said Mr. Dolinski, "but the same night we were deported, and now he wouldn't know where to find us."

Next to return was Mrs. Gorska with her children. Her summer home had been looted by the soldiers, but it wasn't too badly damaged, and she moved into it right away. There was something strange about her, an uncanny serenity. Her husband had been a prominent lawyer in the city of Czestochowa. She told us of his arrest in an even voice.

"One day the prison guard who smuggled notes and other things for us came in with a small parcel. Mark's clothes were in it. The guard said that Mark and some thirty other prisoners had been put into a truck dressed only in their shirts and trousers. Odd, wasn't it? It was January, and so cold." She sat silently for a while, her empty eyes fixed on nothing. "I wonder if the guard was all right. He said queer things. 'Your husband told me to say goodbye to you,' and then he told the boys, 'Your father was a hero.'"

She smiled. "He should be coming back now, don't you think? He's been gone for a long time."

Mother swallowed, held back her tears.
"He hasn't written, not once. So thoughtless. You don't believe that there is another woman?"
Maybe she was more fortunate living in her imaginary world.

June 1940

by GAITHER

AROUND us the hecatomb continued: in Bochnia; in Zielonka; in Szczuki, where 200 men were first locked up in a shed, then machine-gunned, then burned; in Ostrow Mazowiecki, where 600 Jews were massacred; in Konopnica, a village that was wiped out; in Jozefow, where Count von Alvensleben's punitive expedition put 1,300 men, women, and children to death.

But the people in these areas felt the tragedy in the West even more than their own tragedy. It was becoming evident that France would no longer resist the Germans. I took down every day the special communiqués issued through the British Broadcasting Corporation, and friends dropped in to get the news.

On the black Monday of June 17, the Zaks came to our apartment among others. I told them France had capitulated. Mr. Zak's raucous, tearing sobs were such as I had never heard from a man.

The black Monday of June 17 was followed by an epidemic of suicides.

July 1940

by *HANIA*

CASPER fell ill. One morning when I carried his pail of feed to him, I called out as usual, "Breakfast, Casper, come and get it," but no grunts answered my invitation. Casper was in the shed, lying unconscious with his eyes closed. I put my hand on his back; it felt hot and dry. I called Christine. Then the rest rushed out of the house to gather around our pet.

"Let's call Lola," said Mother. "She's so practical."

Gaither fetched her. I don't know in what theater, on what stage, Lola—until the war she had been an actress—could have got acquainted with the ways and ailments of pigs, but she had hardly laid her eyes on Casper when she exclaimed, "My goodness, he has cholera! Look at the square patches of red on his neck and head. Better send for Mr. Godfrejow."

The veterinary confirmed the diagnosis. "I'll give him some serum, but it's rather late. If you're lucky, he will stay alive, but he'll probably be partly paralyzed." He administered the treatment and left.

A hush fell over the house. The unconscious Casper lay in the dust—and with him our hopes of many crocks of lard. Mother, who unshakably believed herself to be a born doctor, took over the nursing. She concocted beverages, and fed Casper drop by drop with a silver teaspoon. She even suggested compresses. That night I slept badly, straining my ears towards the tool shed. I thought I heard a movement, and ran out. There was Mother, her satin kimono drawn tight around her, crouching over Casper and gently massaging his stomach. This was too much for me. Hanging onto the fence, I whooped with laughter.

Fortunately Mr. Godfrejow's predictions did not come true. Casper recovered, and soon was running around. He had, it is true, greatly fallen off during his illness, so that Father suggested changing his name to Greta Garbo. But in due time Casper regained his lost weight.

Lola, the Wilks, the Steiners, the Mielniks—anyone who had a chicken coop or a shed—were also raising hogs. As none of them had grain or potatoes of their own, the search for food became a fierce struggle in which wits were pitted against wits and every known means of competition was put to the test.

The second part of July brought a new series of arrests. The Germans picked up people at random, as if to make up a certain quota. It became so that the most natural acts and words were considered criminal offenses. Mr. Aksamit's case was typical. He owned a little inn on the outskirts of our village and was a meek, birdlike man. He had a university degree, and we used to speculate on what reverses had driven him to his life as innkeeper. The soldiers frequently dropped in for a drink at his place, and one day one of them brought a German paper. Mr. Aksamit picked it up, after having served the beer. He returned it with an innocent, harmless comment on one of the communiqüs. The following day he was arrested. The mayor—it must have taken a lot of courage—went to plead for him, explaining that Aksamit had merely repeated a statement printed by an official German paper. The reply was that even the reading of German war news by Poles was a political crime.

According to a new law, Jews were not permitted to live closer to the borders of the General Gouvernement than thirty kilometers. All the Jews of Bory were notified to move inland on a certain date. Many of them had buried whatever valuables they possessed when the Germans first came. Now they were digging them out, to take them along or to find other hiding places. Late one night Rachel came in. From under her shawl she took out a package. It contained several boxes filled with dollar bills and gold rubles, and a small tin can full of rings, earrings, fob chains, and other gold objects.

"We're afraid to take them, and we don't want to leave them in our garden. Please keep them for us!"

Mother and Father were unwilling to take the responsibility

for this little hoard. There was no safe hiding place in the house. At Gaither's suggestion, the things were put in bottles and glass jars, so moisture would not affect them, sealed, and buried in the orchard.

When the day of departure came, these people, who had lived in Bory for generations, wept, and we wept with them. Old Pejser, dressed in his Sabbath coat and foxtail hat, came to say goodbye. None of us could speak. But at the very last, he said with stoicism, "We Jews have seen trouble before. The Lord has spoken many a time in a harsh voice to our people. Our sins were many; we have to pay for them. Some day, when the books are balanced, things will be all right again. Maybe we won't survive, but somebody will, and the world will go on."

The local authorities, heavily bribed, allowed the Jews of our village to take with them many of their movable belongings. The Jews of other communities were less fortunate.

The vacated houses were put under German administration: some, too dilapidated to be used, were taken apart; others were made into stores for military goods; still others were rented. A few were left standing empty; we soon found out for what purpose.

A few days after the departure of the Bory Jews, the mayor got notice that our community would have to receive four hundred deportees from western Poland. Almost immediately the first group of transported Poles arrived. There were about one hundred. The *Dom Ludowy* (the people's clubhouse) was turned over to them, and the overflow was put in the vacant Jewish homes. The local people started collecting clothes, household goods, and kitchen utensils for them. Not much was gathered, for ours had become a poor region.

One day an old woman came slowly up our path towards the kitchen porch, where I was peeling potatoes.

"Praised be Jesus Christ."

"Forever and ever," I replied.

The woman, with a timid glance, asked, "Would you buy, lady, a piece of homespun linen toweling?"

"Yes," I said. "How much do you want for it?"

She drew out a piece of material two yards long and said, "Maybe a little bit of sugar—or some milk. You see, my grandchild is sick."

Surprised that a peasant woman should need milk, I asked, "Where are you from, grandmother? You must be from way up in the mountains, because I don't remember your face." For miles around we knew everyone by sight.

"We are deportees," she explained. "We live in the club-house."

Mother had heard us talking. She came out on the porch with a basket. Inside were several little packages. There was flour and rye groats, salt, some of our carefully hoarded sugar, and a small jar of lard. She pressed the basket into the woman's hands. "It isn't much. You'll find some farina of wheat for the baby. There is no milk, though. We don't have a cow of our own. But I'll go down with you to the neighbors and see if we can't get some." It was typical of Mother; always the first to act when anyone was in need.

The next time we went to town Christine and I stopped at the clubhouse. It teemed with ragged children, hungry-looking women, and hollow-eyed, unshaved men. We asked for Krolina, the old woman who had been at our house, and were directed to a room on the second floor. We knocked, and a four-year-old child opened the door. The room was bare except for a chair-high log by the window, and two straw-filled sacks on the floor. No sheets, no blankets. In another corner were a battered tin can, a broken plate, and two roughly whittled wooden spoons. On nails driven into the wall hung a cotton skirt and a plaid shawl. The little girl wore only a short shirt, and we could see her thin little thighs and legs, bluish, like a plucked chicken's. I asked where her grandmother was, but she was frightened and whispered so low that we couldn't make out what she was saying. Just then a woman, with a baby in her arms, came in. Without a word she seated herself on the log, with her back to us, and sat gently swaying.

Christine took a step towards the woman and said, "I'm sorry, but we were looking for Krolina. They said she lived here."

The woman didn't seem to have heard. Then I repeated Christine's words, raising my voice, but without results.

We met the grandmother on the stairs.

"Did you see my daughter-in-law?" she asked. "The poor thing was never strong, and now this! She won't speak; doesn't seem to understand. She's been that way ever since the Germans threw us out."

She told us that her son, though left by the Germans on account of his lungs, was still "very strong," "very eager" to do any kind of work. We promised to let her know of any job.

On the way to Anda's one morning I stopped in the market square of New Market. It was thronged. From a distance it looked like good old times; at close range, it didn't. There were no wares except old clothes, too worn to be of any use. I was pushing my way through the throng of secondhand dealers, when I saw, to my great surprise, a peasant woman with two little baskets of cherries. How delighted Mimi would be with such a present! I made a beeline for the woman. But before I could reach her, a German patrol had roughly parted the crowd, knocked her down, and trampled the cherries into the dust with heavy boots.

"Fruit is not for Poles. Don't you know that?" they shouted.

At Anda's home, only the old servant was in, and she told me, drying her tears with her apron, that a notice had come from Oswiecim that Wladek was dead. When and why he had died was not explained. There was a statement that his ashes would be sent for a fee of six marks. Relatives had taken Anda and Eva in for a few days. The maid did not know when they would be back. I forgot to ask what had become of the Wajda child.

After we had regained a certain amount of equanimity following the fall of France, our hopes turned towards the United States. Poorly informed though we were, we instinctively felt

the temporary weakness of England. Only America loomed as a possible dam to Hitler's rising power. People asked Gaither, or even me, with increasing insistence, what America was planning to do. As if we could know!

"Don't they know what's going on here? Don't they care that innocent people are being massacred?"

We could only wonder ourselves.

One day Mr. Godfrejow stopped me. Though we were alone on the road, he glanced cautiously around, then said, "Mrs. Warfield, answer me. Is the United States coming into this war, or isn't she? And if so, when? Don't you know that we won't be able to hold out much longer?"

With a sense of guilt, I cleared my throat nervously and I stammered, "You know I am only a naturalized American citizen. My husband thinks that America will not stay neutral, but we cannot guess how long it will take her to get ready."

I felt as responsible for the decision of the United States as if I had been the President and Congress rolled into one.

July and August 1940

by GAITHER

IN JULY I went to Bory for a short stay. It was quieter there and easier to keep away from people and the news they brought. Sometimes I felt constrained to try to forget the war. But there was always a reminder. Even when I went with my rod up the stream, trout fishing, I met gray-green uniforms —on the roads, on the riverbanks, and in the woods, where trees were being cut.

A post card from Joe, Hania's brother, reached us. He had not written for some months, but we knew through the underground that he was in Hungary smuggling men from Poland to Turkey. We had feared that he, like thousands of other

Poles who had managed to escape, had fallen on the battle-fields of France. We gathered from his post card, written from the prison fort of Komarom in Hungary, that he had been arrested under pressure of the Gestapo, which was already very active in Hungary, and sentenced to four years in prison. Camilla and Peter bore the news stoically.

Through Rudolph Gottlieb—such news did not appear in the German-edited papers—we heard of the massacre in Rzeszow, where fifty-one people were killed. He also told us about the three hundred workmen who were massacred for sabotage in the town of Skarzysko. Pledging us first to secrecy, he said that in connection with this execution a German regiment had revolted. The soldiers, in protest against police orders, had given arms to the Poles. There had been fighting, followed by thousands of arrests and hundreds of executions.

Twelve girls were executed publicly near Tarnow. They had been caught distributing underground newspapers.

Another letter came from Joe. It was mailed from Turkey and signed with a fictitious name, but there could be no doubt it was from him. He wrote that he had escaped the "Sanitarium in Komarom" and, helped by Hungarians, had made his way to Zagreb, Yugoslavia. From there he had gone, mostly on foot, through Bulgaria to Turkey. From many allusions, we gathered that he was on his way to Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.

An unexpected letter reached us from Lwow, via Berlin. It was from Uncle Napoleon. He gave us information about Hania's relatives in Lwow, which was in the section annexed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in September, 1939. Grandmother and Aunt Bogumilla had died of cold and hunger. Uncle John, having lost all his wealth, had died in a hovel. Martha (she had a college degree in history) was working from six in the morning till six at night as a laundress in a hospital. Aunt Teresa had had a rib broken while standing in line for four ounces of sugar. Uncle Joe, his daughter Maryla, and her three children, who had fled from Warsaw to Lwow, had been deported to the Volga steppes. Uncle Joe had not survived the trip in the cold cattle cars. Those still in

Lwow lacked everything—food, clothing, fuel, and, most of all, freedom.

In June the Soviet Union had begun military occupation and political reorganization of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, charging them with having violated their mutual assistance pacts with her and making secret compacts among themselves. Polish sympathy for the annexed countries ran high.

Two railroad workers from Ruda came one morning with their rods to fish in our river. It was the very real necessity of finding food that had brought them. They were going up the stream when three *Grenzschatzen* saw them and called to them to halt. The fishermen did not hear their voices above the roar of the water. The Germans released their hounds. The lacerated bodies were brought to the Kommandantur, which was located in Mr. Wilk's house. Wilk saw them. He knew the two men and listened to the report the guards made. The officer made one short comment: "You were rather hasty."

Uncle Napoleon wrote us again from Lwow. His letter was a frantic appeal for help for his daughter Martha and her husband Zygmunt. We had to puzzle over every word, but finally understood that they were threatened with deportation by the Russians to a prison camp in Siberia. We knew we could help Martha and Zygmunt more readily if they remained in Poland than if they were sent to distant Siberia. It was up to me to go to Zygmunt's parents—they lived in the General Gouvernement—to have them claim their son and daughter-in-law. A few Poles were still being exchanged between Russia and Germany if they could prove that their permanent residence was in German-occupied territory. Zygmunt's parents lived in an out-of-the-way place, and it took me two nights and a day to reach them by train. I helped Zygmunt's father file an application with the German authorities. That was all I could do. (A few weeks later I learned that the exchange of Poles between German-held and Russian-held territory had been discontinued before any results could be obtained from my *démarche*.)

The trip back to Warsaw was roundabout, with innumer-

ble stopovers at rural stations, interminable waits, and hazardous changes. At Lublin, where I intended to catch a midnight train to Warsaw, I spotted a relic of old times, one of those patient, sympathetic Polish redcaps. I put myself in his hands, and he lived up to my expectations. When the train pulled in and throngs bottlenecked all entrances, he whispered to me, "If you're not afraid, I'll put you in a first-class German coach. But if they catch you, they are likely to throw you off the train."

I told him to go ahead. It was dark, and the whole coach seemed to be empty. Gratefully I stretched out my weary legs on the red plush seat of the warm, *Nur für Deutsche* compartment, and I was asleep before we pulled out of the station. Suddenly I was conscious of someone speaking loudly. I opened my eyes into the beam of a flashlight. Two German M.P.'s were staring down at me.

"*Fahrkarte!*" ("Ticket!")

"The game's up," I said to myself, pulling out my third-class ticket. The M.P.'s would know immediately that I was not a German, for no German in Poland would ever buy a third-class ticket, and besides, here I was with a third-class ticket in a first-class compartment.

They raised their eyebrows at the sight of the little rectangle of brown cardboard. "*Sind Sie Deutsch?*" one of them asked.

"No, I am an American."

I took out my passport. Doubtfully they looked first at the binding, then inside. I suppose they did not know what it was all about. They thrust it back contemptuously.

"It's no good. Do you have any other document?"

I had a flash of inspiration. On one of my first visits to the Palais Brühl I had asked for a permanent permit to enter its premises, because the usual procedure of waiting for a temporary pass required so many hours of standing in line. The young official to whom I had addressed this request was in high spirits that day. Magnanimously he had said, "Why certainly, Herr Superintendent. I'll have one made out for you."

That is how I came to be in possession of a sheet of paper

impressively stamped with the German eagle. It merely stated that Herr Superintendent G. P. Warfield was entitled to enter and leave the Palais Brühl at will.

Now I presented this document to the M.P.'s. They watched me intently, but no sooner had their eyes fallen on the heading and the "purple cock" (this was the Poles' nickname for the German spread eagle) than their faces broke out into smiles.

"*Ach so!*" one of them exclaimed. "*Das ist aber etwas ganz anderes.*" ("But that is something wholly different.")

They folded the paper carefully and handed it back to me ceremoniously.

"*Verzeihen Sie, Herr Superintendent.*" ("Beg your pardon.")

Nonchalantly I stuck the slip back into my wallet. "That's all right!"

The two soldiers drew themselves up, clicked their heels, and saluted. "*Schlafen Sie wohl, Herr Superintendent.*" ("Sleep well!")

I stretched out again as soon as they had left me.

News of the death of eminent men awaited me at home. Bishop Bursche had died in Dachau, and his brother, Professor Bursche, had been worked to death in the stone quarries of Mauthausen. Senior Karol Kulisz had also died.

At this time there were in Poland—a country approximately the size of California—24 general concentration camps, 9 temporary camps, more than 60 hard labor camps. In Germany there were thirteen notorious camps to which Poles occasionally were sent. Although regulations and conditions varied, the aim of these camps was always the same: slow and painful extermination of the inmates.

Oswiecim was the most dreaded of all the camps in Poland. Karol Kulisz, a frail old man of seventy-one, had been there for several months, remaining alive under tortures that killed young and husky prisoners. Paradoxically, the first to break were usually those of strong constitution. Finally those who had survived tortures were liquidated. Some were asphyxiated

with lethal gas. Some were swung by hands and feet against a wall till their spines were broken. Others—Kulisz among them—were stripped to the waist and lined up. While they stood at attention, guards poured buckets of icy water over them. Kulisz slumped to the ground, and the guards kicked him to death with hobnailed boots. One of the very few who ever came out of Oswiecim told me these gruesome details.

In the spring of 1940 all foreign consulates in Warsaw had been notified by the Germans that since Poland had ceased to exist as a political entity they would have to withdraw. The American consulate (it had been transferred to the United States Embassy building) accordingly closed its offices. I had gone to the consulate several times during its last days. The atmosphere was hectic and depressing. Files, furniture, and personal belongings were being packed in a hurry. Only one vice-consul stayed behind as caretaker of the embassy.

This departure left a number of American citizens stranded in Poland. Most of them were without sufficient funds, food, fuel, or clothing, and many, despite their American citizenship, had been evicted from their homes by the Germans. They were helpless, and beyond the reach of the representatives of our government. The nearest consulate was now in Berlin, and the Gestapo did not grant permissions to leave Poland in order to go there.

Richard Szymanski, former manager of the United States Lines office in Warsaw, drew my attention to all this. He told me that the Rumanians, Italians, Russians, and other foreign nationals had organized colonies. "Why don't you start an American Colony?" he said.

I answered, "Why don't you?"

"I can't. I am a Swiss citizen."

"Perhaps you had better approach one of the other Americans. I am a preacher and know nothing about organizing such a group."

"I have already spoken to several," said Szymanski, "but all are afraid to tackle it."

He explained that a colony would assist Americans to obtain larger rations of food, clothing, and fuel, at ceiling prices, and it would give its members protection against acts of violence and robbery at the hands of the Germans.

The United States was still neutral, and the Germans seemed anxious to keep on friendly terms with her. I talked over the matter with my colleague Pastor Najder.

"If I do it," I told him, "Hania and I shall become conspicuous in the eyes of the police. If hostages are taken, or arrests are made, we are sure to be the first to be picked up. But on the other hand I feel that it is my duty to help stranded Americans."

The several Americans with whom I discussed this plan were all against it, but my decision had been made. Szymanski helped me with preliminary steps. He spoke excellent German, and we went together to the Palais Brühl, where the civil authorities resided. I received an authorization to organize an American Colony. Ruth agreed to act as secretary and treasurer of the organization, and we employed Mrs. Mossakowska as general manager. Then we notified the Americans living in Warsaw to apply for registration. Two rooms in our English Language College were assigned to the work of the colony, and there we held office hours three times a week, from four to six.

The Americans came, not only from Warsaw but from smaller towns and villages. We examined their passports, registered them, and tried to help them. At first we had 165 members, but later the Germans ordered us to strike off our lists all those who did not live in the capital. This left us with about seventy-five members. Most of them had been trapped in Poland by the war and were in financial difficulties. A few who were married to Poles had not left while it was still possible because it would have meant separation from their loved ones. Some had sent in their passports to be renewed and

now had nothing but a consular letter stating that they were American citizens in good standing.

It was unfamiliar work and took much thought. The saddest cases left us with a sense of futility and despair. Their need was great, our resources were small.

Mrs. Martha Abramowitz was a quiet, sweet-faced American who had come to Warsaw only a few days before the outbreak of war to visit relatives. The relatives had fled during the bombings and had never come back. She was penniless and did not speak a word of Polish. She had written repeatedly to her relatives in America, but no reply had come; maybe her letters had never reached them, or theirs had never been delivered. We provided her with food. Each time she came, she was thinner, shabbier, more hopeless. When the Warsaw ghetto was established she was forced to move into it because of her Jewish origin, and it became difficult to communicate with her. All my efforts did not help to get her out from behind the dividing eight-foot wall. She came to us every now and then, thanks to the official-looking statement I had given her, which said that she was an American citizen. Then the magic statement did not work any more, and the guards did not allow her to pass. I knew it meant starvation, for she had no funds with which to pay for the food which still could be obtained within the ghetto though only at exorbitant prices. Several times she phoned, inquiring if a letter from America had not come for her; then we heard no more. We never learned how she had died.

Then there was Wladislaw Piorowski, a man over sixty. He was born in the United States of Polish parentage. Some years before the outbreak of war he had migrated to Poland, bought a farm, and married. He lived comfortably on the farm with his wife and five children. When the Germans deported Poles from that section, he and his family were driven from their farm. In vain he showed his American passport. They were packed into a freight train with others and dumped in an open field near Warsaw. The barracks for the homeless where he was now living, on the edge of the city, sheltered

about a hundred families. In an attempt for privacy, each family strung up torn sheets and other rags on wires and strings, to make cubicles. Piorowski led me to his cubicle. His eldest daughter, ill with tuberculosis, was lying on a bundle of straw.

"I am an American," he said. "Why did they do this to me?"

He and his family were among those whom we provided with food and money.

Edmund Rutkowski, a butcher from Brooklyn, had crossed the Atlantic in the summer of 1939 in a first-class cabin. He had come to visit his mother near Warsaw, expecting to return to his wife and children in the United States in September. His mother had died in the fall, and he had arranged to move to Warsaw. On the train were some drunken German soldiers. Because Rutkowski couldn't understand what was wanted of him when the soldiers addressed him in German, they threw him off the moving train. He lay there until somebody found him. Both legs were broken, and his skull was injured. He walked with difficulty now—almost a year later—and it was obvious that his mind was affected.

On Monday, August 12, I witnessed my first man hunt. Shortly after half-past nine in the morning. I got on a streetcar at the Square of the Saviour. We were nearing Nowy Swiat Street, when the car stopped suddenly. I noticed agitation among the pedestrians. Then I saw that machine guns had been posted all along the street. Armed soldiers were barring side streets and watching entrance gates. Megaphones on army trucks were blaring something I could not understand. The man next to me had understood, and he trembled with fright as he explained, "They say that anyone who runs will be shot on the spot."

Soldiers—or were they Gestapo men?—came aboard and made all get off. Our identity cards were examined and taken up as we filed by heavily armed guards. When they saw my passport, they released me and told me to go home. On my way, I saw a column of men, with their hands raised high, being marched

out of a side street. The man hunt continued until two in the afternoon. About 10,000 people were arrested. There had been man hunts before, when men and women had been caught in the streets and shipped to Germany for labor. But this time the hunt was on a much larger scale, no women were taken, and the men were shipped to concentration camps.

This man hunt inaugurated a period of severe reprisals. On September 1, the first anniversary of the German invasion of Poland, 58,000 Poles held in prisons and camps throughout Poland were executed.

On September 14 I was going down Polna Street when I noticed uniformed Germans rushing in trucks towards Lwowska Street. This meant trouble, I knew, and the next day I heard the details. German policemen had come to arrest two Poles living on that street. Shots were exchanged, and the two wanted men managed to escape. The Germans arrested 180 men and 20 women who lived in the building where the incident had taken place. A few days later these 200 innocent Poles were shot in Pawiak prison.

On September 19 the Germans conducted another hunt through the streets of Warsaw. Most of the several thousand men taken were sent to the concentration camp of Oswiecim. I found out later that one of the victims was a friend from Bory, Mr. Czerwinski. Only a few weeks ago I had met him in Bory with a fishing rod down by the river. He had then told me, "I can't stand it here any longer. It isn't safe. Too few people to hide among. They have you under constant surveillance here." And so he and his family had moved to Warsaw. Four weeks after his arrest his wife was notified by the camp that he was dead. The letter, as usual, said she could have his ashes for a fee of six marks.

September 1940

by *HANIA*

THE garden, in spite of the wet summer, was surprisingly good, but our potato crop was an almost complete failure. In the lower places the rains had turned our field into a swamp; in the higher ones mice and grubs had eaten the plants. With the help of Krolina and her son, I dug up what there was. For the two sacks of potatoes we had planted, we gathered exactly two and a half sacks. I thought of all the wasted work.

The winter ahead loomed bleaker than ever. Gaither's letters urged me to join him as soon as the work in the garden would permit. There was nothing that Christine and Mother, with the help of Irena, could not do now, so I decided to go.

Food regulations had been considerably tightened, and no more permits were being issued for carrying even small amounts of food. Gaither warned me in his letters not to carry anything, because searches were being made on the trains all the time. But when, shortly before my departure, a farmer brought two pounds of butter, Mother persuaded me to take it. We divided the butter into several small pieces and—after wrapping it in clean horseradish leaves and newspapers, for want of waxed paper—put it, with two dozen eggs laid by some boot-legger hen, among the clothes in my suitcases.

At the Bory station two fully armed soldiers were guarding the entrance to the platform. My heart sank into my boots, and I wished I had not yielded to Mother's arguments. While buying my ticket, I watched the Germans rummaging in the luggage of other passengers. I went straight to them with a smile that was supposed to be natural and unconcerned. Their eyes lit up when they noticed my two bags and a large, shiny hatbox. For some mysterious reason this box, which contained nothing but odds and ends that had not gone into the suitcases, aroused their suspicion. I drew out my keys and began to unlock the two dangerous pieces of luggage, but they pointed to the hatbox, saying, "No, open this one."

It was too good to be true. I asked, "Don't you want to see these first?"

"No, damn you, we are not interested in your bags. Open the round box."

Suspiciously they pulled out, one by one, two nightgowns, my bedroom slippers, and a bottle of perfume. Satisfied that the odd-looking box concealed nothing *verboten*, they let me repack and waved me on.

I escaped two more searches by sheer luck. Once, when another passenger in our compartment, whose lot it was to be searched first, was caught carrying some smoked meat. The poor man, a factory worker judging by his clothes, pleaded in vain. Striking and kicking him, the S.S. dragged him off, while his little overnight case went on the rapidly growing pile of confiscated luggage. The second time, the passengers' papers were examined before the luggage. The Germans drew my passport out of my purse. After a glance at the red seal they returned it with a beaming smile. The other passengers in my compartment benefited by my magic document, for our whole compartment was left undisturbed.

In Warsaw there was less bartering than in Bory. One could still buy food for money, but prices had soared. The black market was the only source of supply. It was created not by a desire for speculation, but by stark necessity. Though we were not aware of the fact at first, it gradually became obvious that the Germans were pursuing a systematic campaign of starvation. In order to achieve this end, they had not only rationed all food, but had taken into their own hands the whole trade in food. Any attempt at free trade was met by sternest reprisals, and ever new laws were published making selling and buying more difficult. But confiscations, fines, arrests, and executions could not stop the illicit trade. Hunger could not be checked by terror. The Jews, who had by then almost entirely disappeared from stores and market places, were replaced by a new group of merchants. These were daredevils, who risked their lives in attempts to make a living for their families.

Many of these modern blockade runners were young boys and girls, sometimes mere children. Deprived of schools, sports, and other normal occupations, they threw themselves savagely into the dangerous game of eluding and fooling the Germans. With surprising ingenuity, they found ever new hiding places for their wares. In the summertime they would scoop out pumpkins and fill them with butter, knowing Germans would not bother with the humble pumpkin. They would carry long canes of smoked sausage strapped to their legs under their clothing. Their exploits would be recounted like tales of legendary knights. Few reflected on the permanent damage this mode of living could cause to the young, unformed minds for whom lawlessness henceforth might appear as something glamorous and romantic.

Meals had shrunk to one course, which consisted mainly of a thin soup usually served with boiled potatoes or rye groats. During the first weeks of fall we were supplied with groats and millet by Mr. Jankowski, a former post-office employe who now was smuggling produce from the country. He was a quiet, middle-aged man, and I wondered how one of his timid temperament could keep up a life of constant danger and physical hardships. One day I gave him an order for oats, rye, and millet, which he promised to deliver the following Wednesday, but we waited in vain. We learned that he had been caught with others and sent to the newly organized camp of Tremblinka, to which smugglers, as well as peasants who had failed to deliver their assigned quota of farm products, were deported. Sometimes whole families were sent there. Reports said that living conditions in Tremblinka were indescribable, and that the average life expectancy there was five weeks.

September 1940

by GAITHER

THE work of the American Colony took me often to the Palais Brühl, where applications for food and other items had to be made. I was told that the food rations allotted our colony would be turned over to us for distribution in fortnightly amounts. It was rather amusing to see our manager, Mrs. Mossakowska, drive up every two weeks in a droshky loaded with potatoes, loaves of bread, bottles of oil, vegetables, and long sticks of sausage. It was a big job to portion out these supplies and pack them in individual bags. A list of the items allotted and their prices was written out and posted on the wall of our office. Those who had the money paid Ruth the amount due, which usually ran from three to four dollars, but it was up to the colony office to pay for those who had no funds. These rations kept the colony members from starving.

Many were in need of clothes. I decided to ask for the same allotment that the other colonies were receiving. The official whom I approached at the Palais Brühl directed me to his secretary, who was handling the distribution. I was taken to her office and stood waiting while she was finishing a conversation with a tall, dark-haired, well-dressed man. She was a woman of striking appearance, and unlike most German women in that her platinum-blond hair was elaborately arranged and her facial make-up carefully applied. Her gown was patently expensive, even to my masculine eyes. A casting director looking for a Mata Hari would have found in her the perfect type. She had spoken to the dark-haired man in fluent Russian, and addressed me in no less good Polish. Her name was Mrs. Przybora, but when I asked her if she was Polish, she looked at me with cold eyes and answered with contempt, "Only my name is. I am German." But there was something about her which made me think that she was Russian, and that she was playing a dangerous game.

The next time I had to see her, Hania accompanied me.

Mrs. Przybora was more cordial. She told us that she spoke no English but knew six or seven other languages. She even engaged us in a friendly conversation during which she tried to find out with whom we had associated before the war and what our income was. She asked casually, looking at her long, blood-red fingernails, "Did you know Mr. Benedict? He was a Dutchman, a representative of an armament factory." When we said we did not, she seemed to lose interest in us.

Mrs. Przybora informed us that we would get our allotment of clothes and shoes through the officials of the Russian Colony, and she gave me the address of a Mr. Lewicky. I telephoned him, and he called in a few days. I recognized the dark-haired man who had conversed in Russian with Mrs. Przybora. We did not make much progress. Although he never suggested a bribe, his whole manner made me feel that he expected a proposition from me. Polite and smiling to the end, he finally promised, when I pressed him, a small quantity of clothing. He said that the things would be delivered the following week.

Before the week was up I read in the paper that he had committed suicide. There were rumors of missing funds and discrepancies in the budget books of the Russian Colony. Without delay we went to see Mrs. Przybora.

She was no less neatly turned out than usual, but her face was drawn.

"Is it true," asked Hania, "that Lewicky has killed himself?"

"Yes," she said, looking away. "He hanged himself."

"Not a very nice death for a gentleman as well dressed as he," said Hania dryly.

"He was a gentleman, not only in appearance," said Mrs. Przybora in a voice trembling with fury. "And what people—" She did not say what she had meant to say, and then spoke quite matter-of-factly again and told us that other arrangements would have to be made for the distribution of clothes. Nothing was ever done.

October and November 1940

by *HANIA*

DURING October, Warsaw was divided into German, Polish, and Jewish sections. As soon as the respective limits were fixed, all Poles living in the Jewish section were given a few days to move out, and all Jews were given a few days to move into the ghetto. Frantic people scurried around, looking for apartments. Bundles, baskets, furniture, and household goods cluttered the pavements. Finding new quarters in a city devastated by bombs and crowded to the bursting point with deportees and refugees was hopeless. When the rumor started that the ghetto would be closed once the transfer had been effected, I became anxious about Dr. Rosen and went to see him. Before the war he was a prominent figure in the Ministry of Finance. He told me that he would move into the ghetto.

"But why should you?" I exclaimed. "You can easily obtain forged papers from the underground, and no Pole will denounce you. Your features will not give you away to the Germans."

"I'd rather conform to the law. I'm too old to hide under an assumed name, too old to flee and lead the existence of a hunted rabbit."

"But what if the Germans decide to close the ghetto? How will you be able to make a living?" Gaither was giving him financial help, and I feared that this would no longer be possible once he was inside the ghetto.

"There is always a risk," he said, "but the war can't last forever. England is strong; America is bound to join her soon. The Germans will go down like ninepins, and we shall be free."

Then I proposed, "If you don't want to hide, why don't you flee to Russia? As a Jew you might be treated better than others."

He jumped up from his chair and exclaimed passionately, "No, never! I am a Pole!"

Klara, his daughter, was crying quietly.

"What are you going to do?" I asked. "Are you going with your father?"

"No, I will stay on this side. I have a new set of personal documents, and I'll take a job in the country, where nobody knows me."

The next days were spent helping Christian and Jewish friends to move. After November 12 all Jews were to be confined in the ghetto. Rosen, Regierer, the Sommers, came for the last time to our home. There was finality in their goodbyes.

November 1940

by GAITHER

IN THE ghetto the Regierers lived on Sienna Street. I had just called on them. In front of their house I saw a crowd. In the center were two elderly, long-bearded Jews crawling on all fours and two German soldiers cracking their whips over them.

"Faster! Faster!" cried the Germans.

The bleeding knuckles of the victims showed that they had been at it for a long time.

"And now you can wash. It'll do you good after the exercise," the Germans ordered.

It had rained, and the street was muddy. As the Jews hesitated, their tormentors lashed out. The old men then took up some of the mud into their hands and rubbed it on their faces. The Germans guffawed.

Somewhat further I came on another instance of Teutonic humor. The Jews were already strictly confined to the ghetto, but Christians could still enter it freely, and tradesmen and peasants braved the regulations to bring in food and sell it. Not far from one of the gates I ran into a gathering. Against a building stood a quaking Jew, with his face to the wall, his

underwear and pants lying at his feet. A whimpering peasant woman, in a full skirt and shawl, was being forced to her knees by two soldiers.

"Lick! Lick him clean!" they cried, pushing her closer to the Jew. "This will teach you to sell butter to a Jew."

The woman moaned, but she was made to lick off the butter that had been spread over the buttocks of the Jew to whom she had dared to sell it.

Winter 1940-41

by *HANIA*

LONG after the Jews had been restricted to the ghetto, Christians were still permitted to go in and out freely. But even this privilege was to be abolished. The new regulation was to go into effect on a Tuesday. On the Saturday before that Tuesday, Dr. Jellinek called. He told about a Jewish friend of his who had not moved into the ghetto; the Gestapo had come to his home and had beaten and kicked him to death.

Gaither and I thought immediately of the Berkowitzes. They still lived in our building. They had registered with the police as "Christians—non-Aryans." Dr. Jellinek's words showed us what their fate would be if they remained where they were. But how could we help them?

The next morning, immediately after church service, I approached Mrs. Berkowitz. "It is dangerous for you to remain in this building," I said. "You must make plans to get around the new regulations."

Mrs. Berkowitz answered, "We are in no danger. We are Christians."

"It isn't a question of religion," I said. "You remember your husband, when he filled out the police registry, put you both down as non-Aryans. It means that you will be treated as Jews."

Her beautiful, gentle face registered fear and surprise. "Did he? I didn't know it. We have got to do something right away."

She fetched her husband. He was indignant at me for having spoken to her about the ghetto.

"Look what you've done!" he exclaimed. "Now she's all worked up. She wants us to move at once. Well, Mrs. Warfield, we're going to stay where we are."

"But you can't! They will find you. The janitor will report you. He's a stool pigeon for the Gestapo, and you know it!"

I told them what had happened to Dr. Jellinek's friend. Berkowitz folded his hands piously and answered, "The Lord has brought us here. If it is His will that we should remain, who am I to oppose him?"

"Jacob, are you sure that it is the Lord's will? I am frightened! I want to leave," his wife said.

He gave her a withering look. "Hush, darling. This is none of your business. You don't understand these things, and so you'd better keep quiet."

She hung her head like a chided child.

I burst out angrily, "This is as much her business as yours. She'll have to bear the consequences as much as you."

Bolstered by my words, she said, "You've got to listen this time to me. Let us go somewhere in the country, where we can register under a different name as Aryans. Mrs. Warfield says she can get us forged documents."

But her husband spoke sternly. "Are you suggesting that I lie? Are you so afraid that you are forgetting the injunction, 'But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay'? I won't do it."

Presently Gaither joined us, and we stood in the empty chapel arguing for a long time. Mr. Berkowitz would neither hide under an assumed name nor move into the ghetto. We left them at last, realizing that it is impossible to save a man in spite of himself.

Several hours later they came to our home. Mrs. Berkowitz

spoke for both of them. "We have decided to move into the ghetto. Can you help us?"

Until Tuesday the Christians were still able to go in and out, but the sentries scrutinized every face, sometimes asked for documents. Both the Berkowitzes had markedly Jewish features. Would there be a way of getting them and their belongings in? If we were caught it meant death to them, and probably a concentration camp for us.

But the Berkowitzes looked so trustingly at Gaither that he said, though I knew that he himself was full of doubt, "Don't worry. I think we'll manage somehow."

Mr. Berkowitz, who once having given up his dictatorship seemed rather glad of it, meekly asked his wife, "What are we to do now, my love?"

"We'll go and pack, Jacob." Turning to me, she added, "We'll be ready to leave early in the morning."

After they had gone, Gaither sat thinking gloomily. I hoped he had some plan in mind, for I had none. At last he went out to look for Bruno, who had a knack of getting through tight places. Gaither was whistling when he came back, and I knew that everything was all right.

That night I slept badly, thinking of all the things that could upset the plan. When we got up, it was dark and drizzly.

"The entrance hall is as black as a well," said Bruno with an encouraging smile. "The janitor won't see me." He disappeared down the street, pushing a little cart piled high with the Berkowitz belongings. There were two iron cots, a sack of potatoes, a basin and pitcher, a few heads of cabbage, and a duffel bag.

Mr. and Mrs. Berkowitz were very nervous when the time came to leave, and I was as scared as a hare. But Gaither was cheerful. He took the husband, and told me to follow in about fifteen minutes with the wife. We were to meet in the room that Gaiter had got for them.

"If you have trouble at the gate," he said, "show them your passport. Make a fuss—cry. While the sentries are busy with you, Mrs. Berkowitz can slip in."

I knew I'd have no trouble bursting into tears. Already I had all I could do to keep them back.

When the men were gone, Mrs. Berkowitz said, "Everything will be all right provided I don't faint."

I looked at her in alarm.

We had not gone far down Marszalkowska Street when she murmured, "I'm beginning to feel faint. What shall I do?" I looked around. Immediately ahead was a drugstore. After having helped the swaying Mrs. Berkowitz into a chair, I asked for a glass of water and a box of bromides. The directions on the wrapper said: One capsule every six hours; two in extreme cases. I gave her two. In a little while she felt better and asked me what I had given her. She insisted on taking another pill. It did her good, and by the time we had reached the entrance of the ghetto, she not only showed no signs of nervousness, but even behaved in a rather giddy way. She joked and giggled, while I shook with fright.

The eight-foot brick wall around the ghetto had been newly plastered and showed damp patches. The top of the wall was bristling with sharp pieces of glass imbedded in cement. Several Jewish policemen, with yellow arm bands, stood inside the entrance. Outside, four soldiers in steel helmets and with fixed bayonets blocked the entrance. The people I could see inside looked in silent misery at the inaccessible world outside.

Mrs. Berkowitz said, "Come, let's hurry. Jacob will be getting anxious if we are late." I took her arm, more to support myself than to give her protection, and we walked towards the gate. My heart beat furiously.

A boy on a bicycle tried to enter the enclosed area. Promptly the guards crossed their bayonets, stopped him, and made him get off. While all four sentries, shouting loudly, gathered round the boy, we slipped through the gate. The Jewish militiamen stared at us. No doubt they knew that Mrs. Berkowitz was Jewish, but they didn't say anything, and we swiftly walked down the street. There were no streetcars, no cabs. A few rickshas circulated over pavements still marked by bombs. There were throngs of people, and activity was

feverish. Peasants and tradesmen, on this last day when they might enter, had flocked in and were selling food on sidewalks and in doorways. It gave me a jolt to pass a group of boys and girls running down the street, playing a game. They seemed so unaware of their tragic situation.

We found Gaither and Mr. Berkowitz waiting. Bruno had not yet arrived with the pushcart. Mr. Berkowitz said, "What's keeping him? My potatoes! My beds! What will we do without them?"

An hour later Bruno showed up. The guards at the first entrance had refused to let him through, and he had had to make a wide detour in order to reach another gate. There he had slipped through unmolested.

We said goodbye to the Berkowitzes with a heavy heart.

On our way back we went to say goodbye to Dr. Rosen. We found him busily writing. He was adding, he explained, a few new chapters to his book on taxes, which had been published a year or so before the war. The little room was damp, and the wallpaper hung in ribbons.

From there we went to the Regierers. They had one small room in an apartment shared with fourteen members of their family. It contained one chair and two sagging iron cots.

Mr. Regierer's aunt had been one of the wealthiest women in Warsaw. Pampered and spoiled all her life, she had been unprepared for destitution. Harassed by the Germans, she had moved from cellar to garret, from garret to cellar. When she could stand it no longer, she went to the top floor of one of her confiscated buildings and jumped out of the window.

Mr. Regierer was optimistic and assured us that the war would not last long. He pointed out that the morale of the German Army was bad, that there was jealousy between the various branches of the military and civil administrations. Even high military officials were stealing and taking bribes, a thing unheard of in the Kaiser's army. As proof he told us what had happened only a few days before.

At that time Mr. Regierer's brother was living on a street adjacent to the boundary line between the Jewish and Polish

sections. Several times rumors had been circulated that the Germans would take this street out of the ghetto. The Jewish families living there would thus have been forced to search for new homes, and the already overcrowded ghetto would have been diminished in size. Some high officials had notified the inhabitants of the streets that they were willing to discuss terms. A committee of Jews met the Germans and obtained the promise that, for the price of four kilograms of gold, the street would be left inside the ghetto limits. When asked for a written statement, the officials indignantly replied that the word of a German officer needed no substantiation. The Jews delivered the gold. But in a few weeks there came an order to move. The committee that had negotiated with the officials went to see those in charge and pleaded their case.

"We paid the sum that was demanded!" they said.

"What sum? Whom did you pay?" they were asked.

After they had explained, the German official laughed loudly. "Well, you've been gypped. These men had no right to promise you anything. You should not have been so gullible."

The Jews renewed their pleas and again were told that four kilograms of gold would be accepted as ransom for the street. They paid, but, as Regierer said, all the inhabitants of Sosnowa Street were searching for rooms well within the ghetto, knowing that a third notice would be forthcoming.

During the farrago of migrations of Christians and Jews, I had had little time to call on relatives. Now I remembered that I hadn't seen anything lately of Lucy and her children. I called on them and found Ella in bed with scarlet fever. I read fairy stories to the children but noticed that Ella wasn't listening.

"What is on your mind, Ella?" I asked.

"It's Aunt Jadwiga," she replied. "Do you know that the Gestapo arrested her? Mother and Aunt Maria think I don't know."

Jadwiga was a spinster aunt who had taught in a girls' high school. When the Germans closed all schools, she took a job

in a factory but gave her free time to teaching small groups of girls in secret.

Ella, turning a feverish face to me, exclaimed passionately, "Oh, how I wish they would arrest me! I would show them! They could beat me, they could skin me, but they would never get a word out of me." The tragedy of a nation where twelve-year-old girls dream of torture and death!

During the following weeks I was a daily visitor at Lucy's. One day, while Lucy was warming up the food she had bought from a public soup kitchen, her sister-in-law, Maria, came in with a young girl. The stranger was startlingly beautiful, with dark eyes and hair, and skin as white and smooth as a camelia. She was a delicate creature, seemingly protected from all harshness of life. She shook hands with me, but did not give her name, and after a few words said goodbye. Neither Lucy nor Maria had mentioned her name. And when I asked who the girl was, Lucy only said, "Anna," and changed the subject.

At home I found our Janka weeping. "It's my brother," she sobbed. "He has died. I had a notice from the Red Cross." She showed me the slip of paper and begged me to go to headquarters and find out more.

The Red Cross had been evicted from their quarters by the Germans, but after a long search I found their new offices, on a distant side street by the Vistula. A kindly, tired woman answered my questions.

"He was at Benjaminow camp. Starvation, ill treatment, cold—the usual things—and now a terrible epidemic of typhus. The German doctors and nurses won't go near it, so the Poles have been permitted to attend the sick. Six out of the nine Polish doctors who first volunteered are already dead. How can you check such an epidemic when neither soap nor hot water is available?"

Having put all the Jews in the ghetto, the Germans made plans for the rest of Warsaw. They began segregating the Poles from the Germans. The best districts were made the German section. We could read in the Warsaw papers descrip-

tions of how these parts of the city would be turned, by and by, into a miracle of urban architecture and landscaping. Poles would not be allowed to enter without a written pass. Meanwhile they were being dislodged. Again groups of people were moving. Many were not permitted to take their furniture or even bedding and clothes. In the Polish section, rooms were at a premium, and few families could afford the luxury of having even a small apartment to themselves. The German housing commission made a survey of all apartments and houses which had not been too badly damaged during the bombings, and wherever a room was deemed not indispensable to the family, roomers were quartered peremptorily. Most people tried to fill available space before this happened with tenants of their own choosing.

Aunt Genia's large apartment was badly damaged during the siege of Warsaw, but the German housing commission decreed that it could accommodate several families. Afraid that uncongenial people would be forced on her, she sold some of her remaining jewelry, repaired a few rooms, and rented them. One room was taken by a family deported from Poznan—a mother, her son of fifteen, and a pretty daughter of eighteen. Aunt Genia grew very fond of all three. One day she telephoned asking me to come at once. I didn't inquire what had happened, knowing that our wires were tapped. I found her in tears. Her roomer's daughter had disappeared.

The girl had found a job a few weeks before, in a civilian administration office. She was used as a messenger, and that morning had been sent with some papers to a bank. She did not return. The news spread, through the usual grapevine, that girls had been kidnaped on the streets by the Gestapo. The head of the office where she had worked was a German, and the mother, desperate to save her daughter, managed to reach him. Indignant that the Gestapo should have annexed, without a by-your-leave, one of his employees, he vowed to get her back.

The next day I went back to my aunt's. The girl's employer had made good his promise, and after much telephoning had

obtained her release from the barracks where, pending transportation to Germany, she was held with several hundred women. The girl told that she had been walking down the street when a black van drew up to the curb and two Germans in civilian clothes had seized her and thrown her into the van. She had been taken to the notorious barracks on Skaryszewska Street.

These raids occurred so constantly that we were afraid to go out. It was hard to determine which was worse—to be taken off the street in a man hunt, or to be arrested at home.

One day Gaither came into the kitchen, where I was warming my hands over the gas burner, and said, "Please come to my study. Mr. and Mrs. Huber are here." They were prominent Lutherans whom we had known slightly for some years. He was a well-known businessman in the city.

"We have come to ask you a great favor," said Mrs. Huber. "You know that my husband is of Jewish origin?"

We nodded.

"Well, this is something you probably don't know! I am a German. Three of my brothers live here in Poland, and two live in the Reich, where they hold high positions in the *Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (National Socialist German Workers' Party). One of them has come to Warsaw to see me. He said the family have decided that I must divorce John. They want me and the children to come to Germany."

Mr. Huber put his hand over hers. "Mary, again I beg you, do as your family tells you. By staying with me, you expose yourself. If you go, you and the children will be safe."

She turned to us. "They will try to force me to leave him. They have already threatened, and they said they would have John arrested. But I have told them that where he goes I will go. Will you look after our children if anything should happen to John and me? Promise that you will not let my family take them!"

"If it is in our power, we will do it," said Gaither. "We will

look after them as if they were our own." I merely nodded, unable to speak.

Tears were streaming down Mr. Huber's face as he grasped Gaither's hand. "I know you will. Teach them to be good Christians, good Poles."

But his wife broke in passionately, "No, that isn't enough! Bring them up as enemies of Germany. Teach them to hate the Germans."

On a cold and dreary day I was shuffling through the melting snow along Jerusalem Avenue, when words shouted in my ear made me jump. "Hey, come here!"

An armed German was motioning. He really meant me. Badly frightened, I came closer, and he thrust a piece of metal into my hand.

"Go to it!" and he pointed to the house beside me. There several people, armed with similar pieces of iron, were rubbing and scraping at a large inscription. It read *Polska zyje* (Poland Lives). The letters, sprawled along the length of the house, had been hastily brushed on. It was one of those inscriptions that appeared everywhere, despite the vigilence of the police, and drove the Germans to fury.

Slowly I scratched at the red paint, thinking about some little boys I had seen one day playing marbles on the street. A policeman was pacing not far off. No sooner was his back turned when one of the youngsters gave a soft whistle. In a second the boys had raced noiselessly to the wall of the nearest house; in another, each one had chalked up one letter. Before the policeman had turned around, they had dispersed like a flock of sparrows. On the wall remained the inscription: *Polska zyje*.

A hiss made me look at the chap next to me. "What's the matter with you, lady? Don't be a slacker. Put some pep behind that scraping." He gave me a comical leer and a wink. "See how I do it? Get me?" I almost laughed aloud. I winked back and worked with a vengeance.

My nose was running and my feet were numb with cold

when a sergeant came to inspect our work. Not a speck of red showed, but he swore and roared at the soldiers and pointed at the wall. Our zeal had removed the paint but had made deep grooves in the plaster, perpetuating the inscription. The Germans lunged at us, but we sprinted before their rifle butts could reach us.

The house was like an icebox. From the moment we got up in the morning until we went to bed, we never took off our fur coats, and still we were continuously chattering with cold. Just sitting at home, both Janka and I got frostbitten hands and feet, and painful wounds opened, which festered and itched at night, keeping us awake. We did not go out much, for, since early fall, hardly a week had passed without a man hunt on the streets.

One day I met Lucy on the street. "You remember Anna?" she asked. I knew that she meant the beautiful girl I had met in her kitchen. "They murdered her yesterday."

"Why?"

"She was a courier. That's why we never told you her real name. The Gestapo got her. They brought her to the headquarters from Pawiak prison. They broke her fingers and pulled out her nails, then they threw her on the floor, and two Germans trampled with hobnailed boots over her spine. She fainted and was taken back to her cell. When they came back for her, thank God, she was dead. They had broken her back." The information had been brought by a member of the underground.

And I had thought that this beautiful girl was a hothouse flower.

We went out less and less. It was dangerous to call on anyone, since the Germans looked with suspicion on all gatherings. Mrs. Sawicka was taken with all three of her children, her mother, the maid, and the two women friends who had come with birthday greetings. Her youngest child was three months old. (A year later, when Gaither was in prison, she was still there.)

Aunt Genia, whose tastes had always been gregarious, was irked. Once in a while, letting all caution go to the winds, she would ask a few people in for bridge. I came once on one of these daredevil card parties. It was amusing to see her and three other old ladies sitting around a card table, with the air of conspirators. Their legs huddled in quilts and blankets, shabby fur coats buttoned tightly, they peered at their cards in the light of a flickering candle. The room smelled like a damp cellar. Their breath made a little halo around the candle. I helped Aunt Genia serve refreshments: strawberry leaf tea and oatmeal cookies. I passed saccharine around, on one of Aunt Genia's crystal saucers, but as it was very scarce all three guests declined it. The ladies exclaimed over the tea, and one assured us it was excellent for the kidneys. The cookies, made of ration-card oatmeal, were hardly bitter at all, and their musty smell was very faint. It was fun. We were having a wonderful time, and the war was almost forgotten. We all sighed when Aunt Genia looked at the time and said, "It's half-past nine. You'll have to go if you want to make it before curfew."

Once, after an especially depressing day, I slipped off to the movies. I knew it was unpatriotic, but just this once—just to get away. I could not resist the temptation.

A light Viennese comedy was on the program. I knew that the news reel would carry nothing but stories of German victories and Allied defeats. I came prepared for that. But when, instead of the Metro-Goldwyn Mayer lion or the Pathé rooster, the main feature was introduced by a symbol and slogan new to me, I was caught by surprise. An enormous gun appeared on the screen, slowly revolving, and a guttural voice boomed, "Victory for Germany! Freedom for the nations of Europe!"

It was so preposterous that I burst into laughter. A middle-aged woman next to me grabbed me by the arm. "You fool. You'll have us all shot with your laughter."

I left hurriedly, sorry to have laughed and even sorrier to have come. On the street, I saw an inscription chalked up on the wall next to the entrance of the theater. It said, "Only swine go to German shows."

"Serves you right," I said to myself.

It was a great joy when Gaither announced that the Friday night concerts would be resumed at our church. Although plays, lectures, and concerts of any kind were strictly forbidden, he had been able, by some miracle, to wangle these weekly gatherings by labeling them religious services. They consisted of two parts: the first, a lecture; the second, music. Though they had nothing to do with worship in a literal sense, to call them "religious services" was appropriate, for they rendered a service of the highest spiritual value. We could not advertise, but the news that here was one place in a city of nearly two million people where Polish was spoken and Polish music played was passed on by word of mouth, and our small hall was filled to overflowing. Sometimes several hundred had to be turned away from its doors for lack of room.

The *cukiernias* had lately been authorized by the Germans to put on musical programs. But the music there was of the shoddiest type, in accordance with the German policy ("Polish musical programs are permitted only when they serve as light entertainment. All concerts which constitute an artistic experience are forbidden. It is forbidden for Poles to play such things as marches, national songs, folk songs, and all classical compositions.") So, when some of the noted artists who performed at our Friday evenings, taking their life in their hands, would play or sing some forbidden composition, the people listened with rapt attention while the million cares that beset them were forgotten.

The Germans' hatred of Polish culture extended to the monuments and statues of poets and composers long dead. I had never liked Chopin's statue in the park on Ujazdowskie Avenue, but when I saw German soldiers pulling it down, I felt as if I were witnessing the death of my closest kin. This vandalism seemed unnecessary even to some of the Germans.

Two German preachers whom we had known in other times came to our home. Both were privates in the German Army now, and we hardly recognized them in their uniforms.

Pastor Ludwig was the first to call. In the course of our conversation, he said, "I have been told that Chopin's monument has been destroyed. Can it be true?"

"It is true. Not only here in Warsaw, but all over Poland it has been done. You see this is a total war. Evidently even statues have to participate in it. Everything that might hold us up spiritually is prohibited."

Pastor Ludwig hung his head and said, "It doesn't seem possible!" After a pause he continued, "If Germany loses, I lose as a German. If Germany wins, I lose as a human being and a Christian. Nothing but defeat ahead for the few that feel as I do. But we are very few——"

The other German preacher came a few days later and spoke in the same vein. He, like most Germans at that time, believed the war had been won, and he was torn by conflicting emotions.

"There is a truce between the government and the clergy right now," he said, "but it's only temporary. Although they do not persecute us openly, they have drafted us, and we are being sent to the worst sectors of the front. If any of us survives the war, we will not survive the peace. Short shrift will be made of us."

Butchering time was drawing near, and Mother was writing cautiously asking us to come and help. "Our hopes are bigger and bigger. It's time to do what has to be done, but we can't get along without your help. Casper is ailing. I wish you would come and help us nurse him."

Gaither could not leave right away but said he would join us after Christmas. I dreaded to go by myself, but the work could not wait, and so I got ready early in December.

I said goodbye to everybody. After seeing Aunt Genia, I called on Lucy. Little George was in bed with bronchitis, and Ella, poor little shadow, was moaning and crying. The child had an earache—an aftermath of scarlet fever. But they had big news. A message had reached them from Lucy's husband, Bogumil. He was staying with "Cousin Angelica." We knew

what he meant; he was in England. Lucy, a true woman, had a sorrow in her joy.

"Look at me! He won't recognize me when he comes back. I didn't have a gray hair when he left. And I have lost one of my front teeth. If only I had the money to get it fixed before the war ends."

I had feared the journey to Bory, but the train was less crowded than usual, and in my compartment as we left Warsaw there was even a vacant seat. My traveling companions and I were congratulating ourselves on this unexpected comfort when the door was pushed open and a dark-haired man stuck his head in.

"Is there a seat here?" he asked in German.

No one answered. We pretended not to have understood. He came in and repeated his question. Again no one answered. But, seeing that he was about to take the vacant place, I quickly said in German, "This is a third-class compartment. For Germans there are second- and first-class coaches in front. This is only for us, people. For Germans, there are separate places."

The way I said it made it quite plain: we were human beings, and they, the Germans, were not. The other passengers knew enough German to understand what I was saying. Their grins showed that they had grasped my meaning. Not so the new passenger. Sitting down heavily, he said, "I prefer it here."

"This is against regulations," I said. "We are slaves, and it does not befit you to mix with us. Besides, there is another reason why we are assigned separate coaches. We have lice. Lice carry typhus germs." I scratched myself, ostentatiously, and the other passengers followed suit.

His face turned red, but he did not budge. The train rolled on, and for several stations we traveled together in complete silence. The German read a newspaper. Then he cleared his throat to ask one of the men, in Polish, what time it was. The Pole, dropping words like ice cubes, said politely, "I am sorry, but I can't tell you. I was recently deported and was not permitted to keep my watch."

At this our unwelcome fellow passenger volubly expressed

his sympathy. No one answered. He then started a long monologue, in which he in turn flattered us, assured us of his friendship, and criticized the authorities. Some pretended not to be listening, others looked uneasily out of the window. It was dangerous to listen to such words. I had kept mum, but when he addressed me directly I looked at him coldly and said, "We Poles have our faults. Maybe the Germans have theirs also. But aren't you ashamed to criticize your own people before us, your enemies? And don't you know that it is dangerous to say such things in public? You never know who may be listening. Everywhere there are spies, stool pigeons for the Gestapo, provocateurs. If you are not careful you will get yourself arrested before you get off this train."

We completed our trip without another word.

During my absence Casper had grown to monstrous size. It was high time to butcher, but this enterprise required caution and many preparations. According to law, no animal could be killed without an official document from the authorities. This was done so that the lion's share of the meat and fat could be confiscated, leaving the owner an infinitesimal part in payment for the care and raising. But there was a loophole in the law, and we meant to exploit it: sick animals could be killed and disposed of without a special permit.

One of our neighbors was a qualified butcher, and we secretly engaged him to come when everything was ready. With the co-operation of Mr. Godfrejow, our veterinary, we spread the mournful news that our pig had choked to death on a hastily swallowed potato. After this, the butchering went off without a hitch. Mother took to her bed, heartbroken over the loss of our pet, but the rest of us bore up bravely, cheered by the sight of the large crocks of lard he had yielded.

After Casper's premature—as we had claimed—death, a very epidemic of accidental deaths broke out among the hogs owned by our friends. The Wilks' pig choked on a thimble; Lola's swallowed a knitting needle; the Steiners' broke its neck.

Unfortunately these accidents were too frequent, and the

authorities got wise to our tricks. The law was amended: henceforth no animal, hale or sick, could be disposed of without a permit and an investigation. Although butchering in secret continued, it became a gamble in which the stakes were imprisonment and even death.

Our neighbor Stypula was almost, literally, caught red-handed. He was butchering in the dead of night. The children, as a precaution, had been posted by the garden gate. It was fortunate. The hog had barely been killed and dressed when they gave warning that the Germans were coming. In no time the utensils and all traces of the crime were removed. But the cauldron of hot water remained on the kitchen stove, and the corpus delicti lay in the middle of the floor. The house was small, and the back door visible from the road. Hearing the soldiers' steps already tramping over the yard, Stypula and his wife grabbed the carcass and dragged it to the *komora* (the best room), where the grandmother lay in bed. "Quick, under the feather bed!" It was high time too, for the soldiers were coming into the kitchen.

"What's going on here?" They sniffed suspiciously. "What is all this hot water for?"

Stypula smiled sheepishly.

"Why, begging your pardon, sir, for a bath. My mother is sick. A hot bath might do her good." He opened the door to the *komora* and pointed to the old woman, who lay yellow with fright.

The Germans made a thorough search. They went from cellar to attic, from chicken house to cow barn, and left.

As the holidays drew closer, Mimi kept asking about a Christmas tree. In our garden we had many young fir trees, one of which could be taken. No one would be the wiser, for Father would chop it down after dark. Although the trees were ours, we couldn't do it openly. The German law made it illegal for Poles to take even a twig, all forests and trees having been declared national property of the German people. Christmas came. Of course, we had made no preparations, and there were no presents for anyone except a few homemade toys

for Mimi. One incident, however, has fixed this holiday in my mind forever.

On Christmas Day we learned that the previous evening in Tarnow thirty-four Poles had been taken out of their cells and shot in the prison yard. The execution had been carried out by Gestapo men who had just celebrated Christmas Eve supper. They were drunk, and their aim was uncertain. The victims were left where they had fallen. No one could get to them, no one could help them. They lay in the snow all night, keeping the neighborhood awake by their groans. Death didn't come till morning.

After Christmas, Gaither came as he had promised. He needed the short rest, but he spent most of his time again making expeditions into the mountains in search of grain and potatoes. He didn't bring anything from his forays, and at last gave up the hopeless search.

Old Mrs. Werle, we learned, had been ill. On a Sunday I decided to call on her. Gaither did not want to go, but I argued that we should not hold the parents responsible for Kurt's defection. The Werles had always been loyal Polish citizens, and their daughters, before the war, had claimed to be ardent patriots. Almost twenty years of friendship linked me with Helga. She had married a Pole, and our long friendship had been strengthened when, shortly before the war, I had helped her through a long, dangerous illness. Gaither gave in, and we went.

Our visit was uneventful until we were ready to leave, when Mrs. Werle asked Gaither, "You don't think America will come into the war, do you? Our papers say she has nothing to gain by mixing in British affairs."

"It is hard to tell without direct information from over there," he said, "but the United States is bound to be in before the year is up."

"Not if Wendell Willkie is elected," she exclaimed. "He is of German stock, I heard, and very friendly towards us. It's only Roosevelt who wants war."

"I'm sure you are wrong. The United States will fight regardless of who is elected."

She said, "They can't win. Our Fuehrer says that we have already won this war."

Mr. Werle had not taken part in the conversation. Helga also had kept silent, but her face was hard and her mouth tight. On the wall was a picture of Hitler—I had not seen it before. So the whole family had succumbed! I felt real pity for the two old people—they were, after all, of German blood—when I said, "I know I can speak frankly with you. Perhaps this will be a long war. Perhaps even the Allied nations will not win it. But one thing is sure: Germany will be defeated."

"And who will be the victor, if it's neither Germany nor England?" asked Mr. Werle, speaking for the first time.

"Sometimes I think the Soviet Union will be the real winner."

"You must be mad," said Mrs. Werle. "Russia is our ally. The Fuehrer and Stalin have a pact. They have decided that we'll rule half the world and they'll rule the other half. Anyhow, we've won already. By the end of summer, we'll be in London." Mrs. Werle almost screamed these words.

We rose.

"I'm sorry," I said to Helga. "We did not mean to upset your mother. She broached the subject, and we said what we thought."

On Wednesday morning Lola came in, as usual out of breath with excitement.

"Quick, get ready. I've heard that the baker is baking bread. We must go and see if it is true."

We almost ran to town. In the market square we slackened our pace, for the Kommissar was standing in front of the drug-store, talking to the mayor. It was safer not to show excitement. The Kommissar gave us a steady look and obviously was saying something about us. We forgot this encounter in our disappointment that the rumor about bread had been only wishful thinking.

In the afternoon the mayor knocked on the kitchen door. He said, "Would you take a walk with me? No need to tell anyone." I got my coat and scarf. When we were out of sight of the house he asked sternly, "Whom have you been talking to lately?"

I knew he meant talking about politics, and I tried to remember whom I had seen in the last few weeks. I replied, "No one outside of the family."

"Are you sure that you have been careful?"

"Quite."

"Maybe you said something that at the time did not seem harmful to you." Then he reminded me of Mr. Aksamit, who, after five months' imprisonment, had returned a broken man, all his teeth gone, deaf in one ear, limping, and bent double because his kidneys had been damaged when he was beaten with a lead pipe.

"I'm trying to warn you. This morning when you were in town with Pani Lola, the Kommissar asked me who you were, then said, 'Better tell Mrs. Warfield to keep her mouth shut. Not even her American passport will keep her out of jail if she isn't careful.' "

I told the family, but we all racked our brains in vain.

Gaither asked once, "What about the Werles?"

We silenced him indignantly. "No, they might be Germans, but they would not be informers."

After supper, Ir dropped in for a game of chess with Father. He gave us the latest news. "From now on the Werles have nothing to worry about. They are fixed as far as food and fuel goes. The Kommissar of the police and his wife are boarding with them."

Gaither had been right. Somehow I felt sure that old Mr. Werle had not done it, but I remembered the look of hatred in the mother's eyes and Helga's coldness. However, I felt no resentment towards Helga. She had been a real friend, but by some strange alchemy she had turned into a Nazi, and if she betrayed me it was because a higher loyalty had compelled her to do so.

Just before Christmas the Polish stationmaster, who had been temporarily left in his old position, was replaced by a German, a Mr. Helm. He was a Rhinelander, a tall, handsome *bon vivant*. He had gone through the usual course of indoctrination given to employees sent to Poland, and spent his first weeks in Bory in fear of assassination. He sniffed at every glass of water, at every mouthful of food, expecting to find it poisoned, and worked with two loaded guns lying on his desk. As soon as his fear was dispelled by the obvious harmlessness of the natives, he set out to look for people with whom he could get acquainted. The restrictions imposed on Polish-German relations seemed obnoxious to him, and he was all for settling down and making life an enjoyable affair.

One cold, sparkling morning, he knocked on our door. Freshly shaved and smelling of eau de cologne, he stood politely, cap in hand, and explained that he was anxious to rent a typewriter. We had safely hidden Father's, so I said we did not have one. Mr. Helm did not pursue the matter. He was searching for a pretext to turn his errand into a social call. Seeing a box of chess on the desk, he exclaimed, "Chess! My favorite game! How about a party, Herr Doktor?" He had whipped off his overcoat before Father had a chance to refuse.

He disposed the figures on the chessboard, and Father sat down with a frown. Mother and I slipped out. Fortunately the stationmaster, after losing twice in succession, got tired of playing and left. But from then on he returned from time to time and, despite our cold reserve, put himself to no end of trouble trying to be friendly. One day he said to me, "I'm no good with the needle. This button has come loose. Would you do me the favor of sewing it on?"

"I'm sorry," I said, "but we have no thread. No thread for the Poles, you know."

The next time he came he brought a pocketful of sewing cotton. I was rather sorry for him, but too much had happened during the last year, and I could not overcome the revulsion that the sight of a German uniform evoked in me.

Helm called one day when Father was out and Gaither was

in Cracow. It struck me at once that he looked unusually solemn. After hemming and hawing, while Mother and I sat hoping he would not stay long, he asked, "Tell me, please. Have you had a death in the family lately?"

Mother and I looked at each other in alarm. She said, "No, not in the immediate family."

"Fine. So you are not in mourning? Excellent." He bowed in my direction. "Then will you do me the honor, madam, to go to a ball with me next Saturday?"

A girl had been shot in Cracow for refusing to dance with a German. The thought crossed my mind, "What will they do to Father and Gaither if I refuse?" "I'm sorry. I can't go," I said faintly.

"Why? You sit here like a nun and work like a dog. A bit of fun will do you good. The ball will be very elegant. The highest officials will be present."

"I have no dress," I objected, feeling that this most feminine of all excuses was politically the safest.

"Oh come," he exclaimed. "There is a war on, and any dress will do. You Polish ladies know how to dress, I must say, and you look nice in whatever you wear."

"But I can't go. I am a Pole, and this is a German party."

Mr. Helm, as tenacious as he was obtuse, persisted even then. "Don't let that worry you. You speak better German than most of these *Volkdeutsche*, and no one will ask for your papers when you're with me."

I decided to speak plainly. "Don't you see how it is? I am a Pole, and although my closest kin have been spared so far, I am in mourning. Our country has been invaded. Millions of our people have been killed. Other millions are awaiting death. This is no time for me to go dancing. Besides, I don't want to be taken for a German. As a Christian I try not to hate you, and when you come as a man and not as a representative of the German people, I am willing to treat you according to your individual merits. But there are limits to my Christianity, and you've got to understand that I could not enjoy the company of Germans under the circumstances."

The blood mounted in his face. He rose and, bowing stiffly, said, "I'm very sorry. I hadn't realized. Forgive me for asking you."

I had not been lying when I had told him that we had no thread to sew his buttons on with. We had used up the small prewar supply, and it was almost impossible to replace it. This shortage made the upkeep of our fast deteriorating wardrobe difficult. Mimi was outgrowing her dresses, underwear, and stockings at an alarming rate, and we had to cut up curtains and make them into garments for her. Our changed mode of life further complicated our clothing problem. There were no dry cleaning establishments to send our dresses to. We needed aprons and dresses that could be laundered without the help of maids. There was much teasing when Mother made a housedress out of a cretonne slip cover. Father maintained that it made her look like an overstuffed Victorian sofa. Mother got even with him: It was Father's job to make kindling, bring in wood for the stoves, shovel the snow. Soon he would have nothing to wear if he continued to attend to these chores in his good clothes. I suggested that we make him butler's aprons out of some dark curtains, but he objected. Then Mother disappeared one day among the boxes and crates in the attic and came back with several suits reeking with moth balls. From that day on Father did his chores attired elegantly in a pair of narrow dress-suit pants and an antiquated morning coat.

Our stockings and sweaters wouldn't last much longer even with the best of care, and what could we do? The peasant women's homespun skirts and home-knitted sweaters had become a source of envy. If we could spin, we could turn our raw wool—Gaither had bought some in the mountains—into knitting yarn. A certain amount of flax fiber was purchasable, and we could spin it into sewing and mending thread. Most peasants in our village grew their own flax, and I bought several pounds of it. I had watched women spinning and thought it would not be hard to learn. The scene in *Faust* in which Margaret sings while sitting at a decorative spinning wheel

flashed in my mind, and I had visions of myself on quiet winter evenings gracefully spinning a fine thread.

In the villages wintertime is spinning time, and it was hard to find a woman willing to lend me her wheel. But I managed to borrow one and proudly carried it home. Kasia, our former maid, was a skilled spinner, and she promised to teach me. She explained the whole process step by step. It seemed very simple. But when I put her directions into practice, everything went wrong. If the thread did not break, the traction cord slipped. If the wheel did not turn in reverse, my thread knotted and broke. As a climax, the spool rolled from my hand and disappeared under the cupboard, and the thread wound itself round and round my legs. Kasia laughed heartily as I had to admit that it was too difficult. She promised to spin my flax for me, and four weeks later she brought me several long hanks of thread.

Though stiff, rough, and dark, it was strong. Christine thought it could be knitted into stockings for Mimi, and that laundering would soften it. It was weeks before I finished the first pair. The stockings were so rigid that, like boots, they stood up on the floor by themselves, but the family admired them. Mimi, however, with the truthfulness of childhood exclaimed, "Oh, Mummy, I'd rather go barefooted than wear them. Look at the blisters you got on your fingers from knitting them. I won't have any feet left if I put them on."

Lola, always resourceful, also had an idea. For a long time she had saved all the wool that Ir brushed out of her dog's fur. The animal was large and woolly, and now Lola had several pounds of wool. She had it spun, and the yarn was like angora. We looked at our Abdulla: he also had once boasted a magnificent pelt. But although his food was as good as our own, he was showing signs of malnutrition. His hair was coming out in bunches, and his body was covered with large running sores. They were painful, and night after night he would lie on the floor whimpering.

Cooking, soapmaking, and other housework kept us busy all day. As long as we kept moving, we could stay fairly warm,

but when we settled down in the evening with our mending, knitting, and sewing, we felt the cold creeping up our legs. We took to retiring early, especially since the Germans shut the electric current off every evening at ten o'clock.

One evening Mother was washing in the kitchen (the bathroom, for lack of fuel, had been closed since fall). I was already in bed, and so was Gaither (he had come from Warsaw for a visit). Father was up, putting around. Suddenly Abdulla, who was lying by the stove in our room, began to growl, and we heard heavy footsteps on the porch.

"A search," was our first thought. We were relieved to hear Helm's voice. His fat assistant—we recognized his booming voice—a German from Berlin, was with him. We could tell that they had been drinking.

"*Guten Abend.* We've come to pay you a call. And where is the family?"

"The ladies have retired," answered Father.

"Too bad. And where's your son-in-law? We've brought some music with us."

Gaither, feeling that Father could not handle the two drunks by himself, dressed hastily and went into the other room. The callers greeted him noisily. I slipped through the ice-cold, unused rooms to the kitchen, to warn Mother. We slipped back unnoticed, and she got in bed with me. The Germans were asking loudly if Gaither wouldn't serve something to drink. Father explained that there was no liquor in the house. The fat assistant began to tell about himself and his family.

"My first name is Richard, and I love music. My father's name was Richard, and he loved music too. My grandfather's name was also Richard." Hiccups! Before resuming his genealogy, he drew a few mournful blasts on a mouth organ.

"You see, all Richards—all fond of music. Doesn't that prove that we are descendants of the great Richard—Richard Wagner?"

Helm was urging Father to play chess with him. What was there to do? The game started. Helm, Father told us later, kept dropping his chessmen to the floor and sliding off the chair

under the table. Each time he picked himself up and apologized, kissing Father's hand. The descendant of Richard Wagner blew with all his might on the mouth organ. Every few minutes one of them would stagger out of the room into the garden, saying that something he had eaten must have disagreed with him. At the approach of ten, the lights flickered warningly as usual. Gaither said that this was a signal for the lights to go out, but they didn't hear him. When, at ten o'clock sharp, the room was suddenly plunged into darkness, they thought it was an attempt on their lives. Father soothed them, and Gaither lit a candle. Then Father and Gaither urged them to leave, saying it was unlawful to circulate after curfew. Although this did not apply to the *Herrenvolk*, they took it in good faith, befuddled as they were, and reeled out of the house.

A few days later Helm came to apologize and to say good-bye. Sober and ashamed, he said, sadly, "Ach mein Gott. A man is so unhappy away from his family and his normal occupations that he does stupid things. What did they want to start this war for anyway? Even if we win, we can't hold these lands. Of course, there is no turning back now. We have to go on with all these massacres. But when revenge comes some day, it will be terrible. We all know it. That's why we drink."

In March, Gaither wrote me from Warsaw that we would have to go to Berlin about our passports. He had applied to the authorities in Cracow for a traveling permit, and asked me to meet him there, and then return with him to Warsaw to await orders from Berlin. Our trip from Cracow to Warsaw was one of the most comfortable we had had since the outbreak of war. Poles were now not permitted to travel by train without a special authorization, and since this was only exceptionally granted, trains ran almost empty. Thanks to our American passports, we had been able to buy tickets.

As the train we boarded was intended for Germans, a diner had been attached. Profiting by this unwonted luxury,

we took a table in the smaller section, where four men were already sitting eating. By their complete silence we knew them to be Poles. As we made ready to go after our meal, the four men, who had overheard us speaking English, got to their feet and bowed gravely. It was their avowal of pro-Allied sympathies.

We found our Janka in Warsaw greatly changed. She had just learned that her fiancé, who had been arrested in one of the street raids and shipped to Germany, had died—worked to death. She went around as if in a daze, falling against furniture, hardly hearing when we spoke to her. Her mother came and took her home.

With Janka gone, I had to do the marketing. The food market for our district was in Koszykowa Street. It was a large one-story building covered with a glass roof, and had rows of stalls inside. Before the war I used to like to wander through it to see the pyramids of food on display. There had been stalls for meat, for vegetables, for flour and cereal, for fruits and groceries, and for cut flowers and plants. Now the glass roof was shattered, and snow and rain drifted in. If there was any meat, it was only horse meat; the flour was gritty rye; the cereal (oatmeal that some peasant had managed to conceal) was invariably as bitter as wormwood, and musty, having been buried too long in a hiding place. No fruit. No vegetables except half-rotten cabbages and some yellow turnips, damp and frozen.

I made up my shopping list. A quart of milk, maybe meat, any vegetables I could get, some bread. But the stalls were almost empty. In front of one I saw white rivulets of milk on the floor. A peasant woman, with her skirts and petticoats tied like a sack above her head, and underwear showing—it was a punishment Germans applied to dairywomen—stood sobbing. (The peasant women bravely preferred to spill their milk rather than let the Germans confiscate it.) A Polish policeman had been posted to watch her; he was embarrassed and unhappy.

So they've been after the dairywomen again, I thought, and struck the milk off my list.

The tradespeople often concealed under their counters such forbidden items as cottage cheese, eggs, or even butter. But this time they had nothing. There had been a police raid the previous day, they explained, and anyone caught selling or buying had been beaten, arrested, and sent to the dreaded Tremblinka camp. At one of the stalls I sampled the oatmeal—more bitter than usual and full of husks. The man who was selling, said, "You can strain it after you have cooked it. Most people don't go to the trouble though. You mustn't be too delicate nowadays, my dear lady."

Suddenly I saw him start. A boy ran by and was gone in a flash. All over the market, a stampede broke out. A woman gave me a push as she dashed by. Men and women rushed in various directions, looking for a hiding place. I was pushed violently against the stall, then felt a heavy impact from the rear. I fell against an old man, and we both went down. I tried to rise, but people kept on stumbling over us and knocking us down. I managed to pull myself up, lifted the old man to his feet, and struggled towards the exit. There the throng was so great that I thought I would be crushed to death. The most terrifying thing was that these fear-crazed people were so quiet. No one shouted, no one screamed.

Quite as suddenly as it had broken out, the confusion ceased.

"False alarm," said a man.

"It was rather too soon for another raid," said a woman.
"They had two big ones two days running."

In another minute everyone looked and acted as if nothing had broken the daily routine. With my handkerchief I wiped the mud off my hands and knees, and I pinned a rip in my fur coat. It was useless to look for anything in the market, so I went out. Between the two tall rows of apartment houses the street was full of movement and noise. Hucksters had their baskets and boxes against the walls. A few Polish policemen were patrolling, but they shut their eyes to illicit selling and buying. The only danger was from the *Volksdeutsche* and the Germans snooping for smugglers.

Trying to look as if I were merely taking a constitutional, I

walked slowly. A woman with matches—a one-legged man with a basket of kindling—a child selling wilted radishes—a tall, rawboned peasant woman, with a basket of horse-radish roots. She looked so innocent that my expectations rose. Hoping that my face was trustworthy enough to arouse her confidence, I sauntered past her and, at the right moment, whispered out of the side of my mouth, "Any meat?"

She did not answer, but I had guessed right. I looked back cautiously, and saw her moving at a leisurely gait towards the shadowy entrance of a building. I let her disappear inside, then followed her. In a dark corner of the basement, she switched out from under her blouse a piece of meat.

"Veal?"

"Uhu!"

"How much?"

"Forty."

"All right." No hesitation, no weighing, no bargaining. She helped me shove it inside my muff. Houdini himself could not have been more deft. We left the building separately.

Our American food rations, though twice as large as those of the Poles, were never sufficient and had to be supplemented in the black market. As it was not possible to buy food in quantities, shopping had to be done almost daily. It took up much time and energy, and I realized I had to have a maid. Mrs. Latinek said she knew of the right person and sent her around. The candidate was solemn, dumpy, and not exactly prepossessing. I asked her the usual questions. Her name was Apolonia Sowa. She was forty-five, unmarried, and had been with her present employers for eight years.

"And why are you leaving them?" I asked.

"It's hard for them to keep me. The master has been in prison since September. You understand, the money. I try to eat as little as possible, still I've got to have something once in a while. It'll be easier for them when I'm gone."

I decided at once to take her. But knowing that she was a Roman Catholic, I said, "Before we come to an agreement, I want you to know that we are Protestants."

"Germans?" she exclaimed in alarm.

"No, not Germans, Protestants."

She looked at me suspiciously, then said stolidly, "I'm sorry, but I can't give you an answer right away. I'd like to think it over." I knew she meant to investigate our political background. A few days later she phoned to say she would take the job. We had passed the test.

On March 15 Pola moved in with her wicker trunk and several cardboard boxes. And with her came neatness, order, and one of the truest friends our family ever had.

The day after Pola came we started out for Berlin, having received the long-awaited traveling permit from Cracow. Pastor Najder, also armed with a traveling permit, accompanied us. He was going to visit our congregations in territory annexed to the Reich. We stopped at Poznan, where Pastor Naumiuk was still living, though all church activities had been stopped by the Gestapo.

Gaither had reminded me, before we got off the train, that I was not to speak Polish in public, use Polish names of cities or streets, enter public parks and gardens, sit on benches in public places, or enter restaurants, cafés, and beauty shops. To the long list of *verboten* items that encompassed our life in the General Gouvernement, many more had been added here in Poznan.

Mr. Naumiuk met us at the station and piloted us to his little attic room on a narrow side street. He had moved for the eighth time since the German invasion. Mrs. Naumiuk took me into the kitchen, where I washed and changed my clothes. I told her that I intended to go to the Latineks' former home and claim a few of their possessions from the present occupants.

"For heaven's sake! They'll beat you, or maybe arrest you, and you won't help anybody."

But I thought I could appeal to the new occupants, who, I had been told were civilians. I would talk to the wife, even beg.

I went at once to the familiar address. I rang, and a young, red-cheeked woman opened. There, inside, was the hall

mirror, the green carpet, the hatrack. Through the open door I could see the dining room with its oak table, around which Danuta and I had played games when we were children. There was the old sofa, the heavy buffet, everything as I had remembered them. The furniture stood in its accustomed place—nothing seemed to be changed.

I drew out my passport. "I am Mrs. Warfield," I said. "My husband is a pastor. We are Americans. I have come on behalf of friends of mine."

She listened amiably until I explained my visit. Then her smile vanished, and her blue eyes hardened.

"You can't have a thing. Everything is mine. These people should have been shot anyway, my husband says. Go at once, or you'll be sorry."

At the next place I was more cautious. Instead of going up to the apartment, I stopped first at the janitor's lodge, hoping that a Pole had been left in this humble position. And so it was. I asked him about Mrs. Isabella Moszczenska, an old friend of Mother's.

"Good Lord, she's not here. They threw her out early in 1940. She was alone when they came. The daughter had joined the Polish Red Cross, and the son-in-law and grandson had joined the army. I heard that she slept in doorways and under bridges. One of her former servants found her half-conscious, sitting on the curb. He took her home to his little room, and she died there."

In the afternoon a few members of our scattered congregation came to see us at the Naumiiks'. Risking their lives, they brought gifts of bread and cheese.

From them we learned of the imprisonment and death of many friends and about the infamous Fort VII on the outskirts of town. Here the Germans had organized a school of torture, in which the Gestapo were trained in special acts of brutality. It was also one of the first prisons to use lethal gas. The inmates of neighboring insane asylums and old people's homes were brought here to be put to death in the *Entwesungskammer* (death chamber).

March 1941

by GAITHER

As we were passing the 1939 Polish frontier, on the train from Poznan to Frankfort on the Oder, a railroad guard examined the passengers' permits to enter the Reich. Hania's permission was in order, but Najder and I were told that we would not be permitted to re-enter the General Gouvernement. The clerk who had made out our documents in Cracow had forgotten to add, after "to Berlin," the words "and back."

Frankfort on the Oder was dark when we reached it shortly after seven. Not a light shone in the windows, not a street lamp was lit. Najder, who was spending the night at the home of the local Methodist preacher, left us at the station. Hania and I groped our way in the dark to a hotel that had been recommended to us. The hotel clerk took our passports and told us there had been an air raid the previous night. The British had dropped no bombs, only flares. After changing our clothes, we went down to the hotel restaurant. We ordered a modest meal. Fortunately it required no ration points, for we had none valid in the Reich. No bread was served with the meal, and the waiter said that none could be had without ration points. A fat German at the adjoining table jumped up and turned to us with a wide smile.

"You are Americans, *ja?* Let me present you with two rolls." He brought them from his own table and set them down with the air of a man offering orchids to a prima donna.

"*Na, schön!* ("Fine!") My brother is a businessman in Detroit. I like Americans. Some day when this stupid Roosevelt is gone, we'll do business with America again."

I saw Hania bristling and swiftly gave her a kick under the table. This was no time for an argument.

After the meal we went out for a stroll, hoping that the moon had come up. But the streets were pitch-black, and we soon returned to the hotel. The man who had given us the rolls stood by the desk, and he officially took our key from

the clerk and led the way to our room. We accepted this service as natural, thinking he was one of the staff. While he was fitting the key to the lock, Hania whispered, "Should we tip him?" I put my hand in my pocket, but at that moment the German threw the door of our room wide open and exclaimed, "I am here on business, and I regret that I have to leave tomorrow morning. I should be delighted to have an opportunity to talk to you. Should you want anything, my room is at the end of the passage." He clicked his heels and bowed, withdrawing backwards.

With the door locked, we considered what this hospitality could mean. Hania was positive that the man was a secret police agent, but I thought he was merely a wide-awake businessman eager for American contacts.

March 1941

by *HANIA*

IN WARSAW we had heard lately of R.A.F. activities over Berlin, but when we reached the German capital it showed few scars. Unter den Linden was aflutter with swastikas and flags. Several times detachments of soldiers, singing lustily, passed us. Civilians and military alike looked well fed, well clothed, prosperous, and sure of themselves.

But the personnel and the guests of our hotel seemed apprehensive. The maid who came with the towels reminded us to black out at night and showed the way to the shelter.

The following three days, instead of attending to our business at the consulate, we tried to get Gaither's and Najder's traveling permits straightened out. Our wanderings from office to office, and police station to police station, took us from one end of Berlin to another. With satisfaction we noticed some streets temporarily closed to pedestrians; and scaffoldings which workmen were busily putting up around buildings.

After many telegrams to the Cracow Gestapo headquarters, Gaither and Najder received new permits, and we were free to attend to the business that had brought us. We looked forward to talking with our consulate officials.

On our way to the Pariserplatz, we almost ran. They would have real news. They would give us a fresh view on the political situation. We had hardly sat down in Mr. Z's office, when Gaither asked eagerly, "What do you think of the situation?"

Mr. Z answered gloomily, "What is there to think? They are winning. They've really won already." He fitted the tips of his fingers together pompously. To us his words were like a blow on the head.

"Aren't you underestimating England?" Gaither asked. "Hitler won't have an easy time conquering the British. They are stronger today than they were a year ago, and the United States is helping more and more. Our production, our factories—"

"My dear man, you've been listening to the BBC. Look!" He pointed through the window to a detachment of marching soldiers. "The best army in the world, the best equipment, the best professional officers, the best army staff and discipline. Nation-wide discipline. Unlimited reserves of ammunition and food."

We sat miserably as he continued, in a melancholy, omniscient manner, "British war material, I make no bones about it, is inferior. And American planes, well, I'm no expert, but—"

When we had left his office, Gaither shook himself like a dog after a cold bath and said, "Never mind, sweetheart, he doesn't know what he's talking about. Sitting here under Goebbels' nose, he's poisoned with propaganda. Besides, his wife is German. That might have something to do with his views."

But we found out that Mr. Z's views were shared by many of the consulate staff, and that evening we had another blow. We were eating our dinner in a little Italian restaurant when the radio was turned on for the war commüniqués. The an-

nouncer gave out the news that Yugoslavia had joined the Axis powers. The people around us shook hands, congratulating one another and laughing. The food stuck in my throat—and evidently in Gaither's too, for he put down his napkin and said, "This food is poisonous. Let's go, if you've finished." We paid hastily and returned to the hotel.

Had Mr. Z been right? Then why resist? Why these thousands of martyrs if the cause was lost?

All night I lay awake, listening for the sound of planes. How gladly would I have gone down with the hotel, for the joy of seeing Allied bombers over Hitler's capital.

In the morning we went back to the consulate for our new passports. We hated every step that took us closer, but on arrival we were pleasantly surprised. We learned from Mr. Birkeland that the announcement about Yugoslavia's joining the Axis had been premature. We will have a warm spot in our hearts for Mr. Birkeland as long as we live for the lift he gave us that morning.

Our traveling permits had been extended, which gave us a few extra days in Berlin, and so we had the opportunity to meet several German acquaintances whom we had not seen since the outbreak of war. One of them, old Mr. Unruh, whom I had always admired for his ardent pacifism, called on us at the hotel. Our first pleasure of seeing him was dampened by his obvious embarrassment. He whispered, "Please don't speak English here. Let's go where we can't be heard."

We took him to our room, but even there he would not let us speak above a whisper. Several times he listened at the door. We spoke frankly.

"Terrible, terrible!" he said. He took my hand.

"My dear child, it's incredible that human beings should do such things. But we have to accept this tragedy humbly. Nothing happens without the consent of the Lord. If it is His will that the Polish nation should perish, we must accept it."

I snatched my hand away and got to my feet. I wanted to cry, "So this is your way of getting out of your share of the responsibility. Hide behind the cloak of Christian humility.

It is people like you who are giving the moral support to the monsters that are ruling you. And you dare call it the will of God!"

But the words would not come out. Besides, what was the use? One can struggle against vice and evil, but there is no weapon against moral cowardice. I left Gaither and our guest and went out into the cold air.

When I came back Mr. Unruh was gone. Gaither told me that he had asked us to have dinner with him that evening.

I reproached him. "Why did you accept?"

"He means well. He feels deeply about what is happening. We must not condemn him entirely. It would not be Christian. Let us not be the ones to break the last thread of understanding in this sea of hatred."

Shortly before seven we met Mr. Unruh at the Hotel Excelsior. We were taken aback when we saw we were not to be his only guests. Two other men were present, one an officer and the other a civilian. The latter, Mr. Krüger, I remembered having met in Copenhagen the summer before the war. He greeted me civilly enough, but I noticed a slight recoil when I gave him my hand. Of course! I was a Pole, and he was a German.

Mr. Unruh, with a shy smile, put in my hand a nosegay of lilies of the valley. The gesture was so typically German that it took my breath. Whole countries ravished and devastated, millions of corpses, and then this—a posy!

The Excelsior restaurant was full of men in uniform and civilians. It was strange to see Germans behaving in a civilized manner, speaking in soft, hushed tones. Would anyone who had not seen them on conquered soil believe that they were the bloodthirsty barbarians we knew so well?

Major Jäger and Herr Krüger were sitting on my left, Mr. Unruh was on my right. "Twelve million men under arms," the Major was saying. "But there are still many young men working in the factories, and there is no reason why drafted women should not take their place. Then there is all this

imported labor. We'll have no trouble raising the army to eighteen, twenty, even more, millions."

"But drafted men are not soldiers," said Mr. Krüger. "It takes time to train them."

"They can be made into good fighting men in a few weeks' time," said the officer. He was right. Many Germans had been sent to Poland for their training. I had watched them, some of them only sixteen or seventeen years old. The goose step seemed to be their natural gait, and they had the cold eyes of born killers.

Mr. Unruh engaged my attention, but when I was free again to listen, Mr. Krüger was saying, "The thing would be to attack from several sides at the same time."

"Yes, and strike before they realize what is happening. The only difficulty lies in moving large numbers of troops across Poland rapidly. Our railroad equipment is in critical shape."

Russia! They were talking about attacking in the East! I had no doubt that they were discussing an imminent campaign. Hadn't we heard Germans, weeks in advance, talking openly about the invasion of Norway, the invasion of Denmark, the annexation of Hungary? Indeed, it was not difficult to be a Mata Hari. Oh! If only I knew to whom to go with my information! I could hardly wait for a chance to tell Gaither.

The street was pitch-dark. "Gaither!" I said softly, putting my hand on a masculine arm. But it was not Gaither. From the contraction of the muscles and quick withdrawal I knew I had touched Krüger.

In our room Gaither and I discussed the overheard conversation. We both realized it had significance.

March (continued) 1941

by GAITHER

DURING the last days of our stay in Berlin, Hania and I were invited to dinner at the home of a pastor we had known before the war. His wife received us cordially, but not so the eldest daughter, a girl of about twenty. She took every opportunity to taunt us and to gloat over the advances of the Germans in North Africa. Once she jumped up from the table, saying she must listen to the news over the radio. When she came back her face was flushed with joy. She danced around the room, singing her words. "We're winning, we're winning. Tobruk is expected to fall any minute. Thousands of Britishers have been wiped out. They're lying in the sand. They'll never sing 'God Save the King' again."

Her mother and father were embarrassed. "Please, dear," they pleaded weakly, "not so loud. We have guests."

A large picture of Hitler hanging in the living room made her ecstatic. "Doesn't he look wonderful? I think he's the handsomest man in the world." There was mystic exaltation in her face, and in her words was a blind devotion, fanaticism so savage it was frightening. These followers of Hitler were not political partisans supporting a new program of social or economic reform. They were religious zealots blindly devoted to their messiah.

Before our trip to Berlin our friends had pointed out that if America entered the war our presence in Poland might prove a handicap to our church and a danger to ourselves, our relatives, and our friends.

The Poles had once suspected me of being a German spy, and the Russians had seen in me an agent of the British Intelligence Service. Why shouldn't the Germans have their suspicions too?

In Berlin I talked to many Americans. Most of them had no doubts that the United States would soon be fighting, and they advised us strongly to go home while it was still possible. Hania

and I finally decided to plan at once for our return. I wired our Board of Missions in New York asking them to make reservations on a boat from Lisbon, and we applied for our Spanish and Portuguese visas.

Having made these arrangements, we were ready to return to Warsaw. The trains in the Reich were congested, and on the advice of friends we went to the Zoological Garden Station hours in advance, hoping to board the train there. But many others had had the same idea, and the platforms were packed with civilians and troops. This did not cause us great concern, as we had had good training in Poland. Our compartment was well filled. Facing us sat an old lady and her grandchild. The grandmother, a plump, rosy-faced person, and the little girl, with long, fair braids, made a pretty picture. They whispered and giggled as they ate their lunch of sandwiches and fruit. Then the little girl said she wanted to play, and the grandmother produced a pad of paper and two pencils. They drew lines and squares, which they marked with dots and crosses. When one of them scored a point, she would say, "I have sunk an English ship!" or "I've shot down two British fliers!" The little girl won, having killed off a great number of Englishmen. In Poznan, these two got off.

The train emptied as we drew closer to the General Gouvernement. At one of the stations, a poorly dressed woman got on, carrying a baby and a suitcase. Two frightened children were holding on to her skirts. Though by now there were many vacant seats in all the compartments, she stayed in the corridor, leaning against the wall, with eyes closed, her face white and tired. I went up to her. "Why don't you sit in one of the compartments? It's cold out here."

"We can't. We are Poles."

I had forgotten.

The contrast of Warsaw, after ten days in Berlin, was startling. Ruins, rags, and haggard faces. And yet, in the midst of this desolation, faith in an imminent victory swept over me like a wave. I knew we would win. And my conviction was shared, as a current anecdote plainly showed:

The Lord, hearing a commotion on earth, sent the Archangel Gabriel to investigate. Gabriel returned looking perplexed.

"Indeed, I don't know what it's all about," he said. "They all seem to have gone mad. In England I found life pretty much as usual. Tea at five, dinner at eight, and everyone in civilian clothes. But all I could hear was, 'War, war, war.' In Germany I saw nothing but airplanes, tanks, and marching men in uniform, and all repeated, like maniacs, 'Peace, peace, peace.' The craziest people, however, were in Poland. There I found nothing but prisons, ghettos, and concentration camps filled with hungry beggars. And yet the only cry I heard was 'Victory, victory, victory.' "

April 1941

by HANIA

FOR a week after our return from Berlin, Gaither was running a temperature. Pola and I had to turn away the hundreds of people who demanded to see "Pan Pastor."

But I didn't have to look twice at the man who stood in the hall one day to know that it would be cruel to ask him to come a second time. So I said, "My husband is sick. Could you tell me what you wanted to see him about?" I took him into the study.

In the bright light of the room I saw his greenish pallor. I knew that only long stretches in dark cells produced this particular tinge. Red scars on his face stood out angrily. His clothes looked as if they had been made for a man twice his size. His head was covered with festering sores. In his eyes was a look of inhuman fear.

"My name is Witold Konar," he said, handing me an identity card. His hands shook. "I was a journalist."

The document showed a picture of a robust, smiling young

man. I looked from it to the wreck across the desk. He noticed, and said, "That's what they made out of me in three months at Mauthausen." The enormous quarries of Mauthausen are in Austria, near Linz. They had become one of the largest concentration camps in Europe.

It took him a long time to tell his story. He coughed often and had to stop for breath. A year ago he had been arrested. No charges. For the first six months he was kept in Pawiak. Then he was taken to Szucha Avenue.

"They questioned me about the underground. I knew nothing, but they wouldn't believe me. The Kommissar turned me over to two men. They had lashes with little pieces of lead on the end. I fainted several times, but they threw cold water in my face. When they were through with me, I was sticky with blood. Then I was taken again to the Kommissar. He offered me a cigarette; I didn't dare refuse. But when he told me to sit down, I thanked him and said I would prefer to remain standing. Every movement was agony, and I could not sit down. The men who had brought me pushed me into the chair. I fainted again. When I came to I was asked the same questions. They couldn't get anything out of me, so they sent me first to a temporary camp near Lublin, then to Mauthausen."

He did not want to tell more. "Why should I tell you? It's better for those who are still free not to know. Sooner or later everybody will find out for himself."

But I wanted to know. As so few ever returned, this was an occasion for historical truth.

"Have you noticed? Half of my left ear is gone. Frozen, rotted away. We wore only cotton overalls. Nights, we slept in them. Pneumonia was a frequent cause of death. Heart failure was another. For the least infraction, a man would be made to run with a load of stones or cement until he dropped."

"How many prisoners were there in Mauthausen?"

"It wasn't possible to count them. Thousands. The majority were Germans and Austrians, but there were also many Poles, Czechs, Jews, and others. I imagine the number must have been kept at a certain level, for though men died by the hun-

dreds, others were constantly brought in. Three trucks were in operation. One was used to bring food for the camp; the second brought the prisoners; the third was used as a hearse, to carry corpses to the crematory."

Several of our friends, we believed, had been sent to Mauthausen, and I asked him if he had met them.

"We didn't have the chance to get acquainted. During working hours we were too closely guarded. For stopping, talking, or slowing down, men were kicked and beaten, often shot. There was a Czech whom I knew better than the others. He slept next to me for a while. He was an older man, about sixty, a doctor. We were carrying stones one day, and he fell. The guards came running and kicked him to death.

"We didn't trouble asking for names and addresses, dying off as rapidly as we were. Corpses don't need introductions. We were preoccupied with one thing only: how to get to the crematory as quickly as possible."

He told how he came to be released. One day, after a severe flogging, he had had an internal hemorrhage. The camp doctor pronounced him as good as dead. Through a coincidence, one of the camp officials was approached at that very time by someone who offered a large bribe for his release. His wife had sold everything to make up the ransom, and friends had increased the sum. It was substantial, and the official accepted it, thinking he was releasing one who was dying anyway.

"Now I am getting well again," said the journalist, squaring his sagging shoulders. "Only my arms bother me. An aftermath of the 'post' they once gave me, for smoking during work. It was one of the worst experiences. They bend your arms backwards, tie your hands together at the small of the back, then suspend you by the wrists on hooks driven into the post. Your feet don't touch the ground, and the weight of the body gradually dislocates your shoulder joints.

"I want to get away. Pastor Warfield is an American, and I wondered if he could help me. If only I could get to England! I would tell them what is going on here. I would show them

my scars, my wounds. If they could hear my story, they would come to our rescue."

It was terrible to see the despair in his eyes when I told him Gaither could do nothing.

Ola, whom I hadn't seen for a long time, phoned me. She had been Kurt's wife, but for several years before the outbreak of war they had lived apart—without a divorce, for they were Roman Catholics. Over the phone she told me that at last she was free. According to the new laws, a German could not be married to a Pole. Where such a marriage had been contracted previously, it could be dissolved without difficulty. Kurt had mailed the request for a divorce on a post card addressed to the proper office, and it was granted.

"You must come and celebrate," Ola said. "This is a great day for me."

I found her radiant. The restaurant she had opened was doing well. She knew how to place her bribes. Though many restaurants were closed every day, hers was not bothered. Back of her business place she had a large apartment, which was packed with refugees—homeless men and women, war orphans, and children whose parents were in jail.

Walking home, I thought of her kindness, her resourcefulness, her energy when it was a question of helping others. All of a sudden I was in the midst of a commotion. A woman was running towards me. She shouted, "They're catching!"

I felt my heart swelling until I could hardly get my breath. People were running in all directions looking for a hiding place. I ran into a side street and plunged into the entrance of an apartment house. Higher and higher I ran up the steps, stopping only at the top landing. Impossible to go farther.

Inside my muff, I clutched my new passport like a weapon. But they might take it and tear it up. It might be months before Gaither would find out what had become of me. I looked at the two doors on the landing. One bore a nameplate: Grabowski. A good Polish name. I rang. A middle-aged woman opened the door.

"Please let me in," I whispered quickly. I thought someone was coming up. "They're catching!"

"Of course, come in."

I sat down by a dining table in her cold, almost empty room. My knees were shaking, and my heart was pounding sickeningly. I was nauseated. The woman brought me a glass of water.

"My husband was taken in one of these man hunts last fall," she said. "He's dead now." She brought out his last two letters and the death notice from the camp authorities. She insisted that I read them. They were the usual thing: "I am well. I am working. My thoughts are with you and Janek. I'm praying for faith and courage."

Hours later streetcars were running again, and pedestrians were moving normally. I waited a bit longer, then said good-bye. At first, I started nervously at every unexpected sound, but soon I overcame my fright. I was not far from home, and my heart didn't even miss a beat when three Germans stopped me. They were resplendent in their uniforms, typical of the Junker class. One of them, with a monocle which he kept dropping and putting back into his eye, asked me, "*Können Sie uns den Weg zum Theaterplatz zeigen?*" ("Can you tell us the way to the Theater Square?")

"Sie müssen jemand anderen fragen. Ich verstehe nicht Deutsch." ("You must ask someone else. I do not understand German.") I had answered with a sweet smile, and moved on swiftly. At the next corner I looked back. The three were still standing there, looking slightly dazed.

It was early spring, the hardest time of the year. Whatever food had been hoarded in the fall was gone, and it would be months before the gardens would yield their first crops. Pola was doing wonders with what we could get. Her soups, made with half-frozen potatoes, millet, and occasional vegetables, were masterpieces of ingenuity. But even she could not work miracles. We were underfed, and felt tired and listless all the time. Our hair started coming out alarmingly. One day I met

Jadwiga, Dr. Pajak's wife. I hadn't seen her again since the time Gaither had brought her Stefan's greetings from Russia. She looked thin and tired herself, but said, "You're not looking well. Why don't you come and let me give you an examination next week?"

She was a doctor of medicine, and had taken over her husband's practice. When I arrived, several people were in her waiting room. My turn came, and I went into her office. Jadwiga was very white.

"Did you notice the two women who left just before you came in?" she asked. "The mother is the widow of a doctor, a colleague of Stefan's. The girl is eighteen. In the fall she was kidnaped off the street, and no one knew what had become of her. She came back recently."

"How?" I asked, knowing that these girls seldom, if ever, were released.

"She ran away, got home after weeks of tramping across the country. She has syphilis and a complete nervous breakdown. She'll never be well."

I felt ashamed that I had come with my little complaints.

"Maybe it is best," she said, "when they do as they did at Chelmno."

I asked what she meant, and heard for the first time how this institution for the insane had been liquidated. One day S.S. guards had summoned the staff. By noon the whole building was to be vacated. The director argued that he had no place to take his patients, a number of whom were idiot children.

"Don't let that worry you. We'll take care of them." The four hundred were taken off in trucks to a near-by wood and machine-gunned.

Before long the insane asylum of Tworki, near Warsaw, and many others were to be liquidated the same way.

May 1941

by GAITHER

LEAVING a German-occupied country in time of war was going to be, I soon found out, a Herculean task. I was glad there were only three of us in the family, for each had to have a birth certificate and many other documents. Both Hania and I had to have, separately, a marriage certificate, an affidavit to the effect that we had neither bank deposits nor real estate in Poland, and a statement from each of the following: the local criminal police, the local Gestapo, the local military authorities, the housing bureau, and the tax bureau. Many of these documents had to be in duplicate. Further, each one of us three had to have an itemized list of all the clothing and personal belongings we were taking out of Poland. I wrote out the number of suits, ties, pairs of shoes, and pieces of underwear I was taking. Hania made lists for herself and Mimi. Even toilet articles had to be listed. Hania's jewelry—none of it of great monetary value—had to be carried to a special office in Cracow where an expert examined every brooch, every ring, every clip through a magnifying glass. Each piece was carefully weighed. Even the wedding ring was checked.

Mimi's case was more involved. She had been living in Bory since the outbreak of war, and this necessitated special trips to get documents from the district police in New Market and the authorities of Bory. In my wanderings through administrative labyrinths, I reached the stronghold of the District Governor in Cracow. He received me with a mixture of sarcasm and patronizing tolerance. When he learned we planned to sail from Lisbon, he inquired, "Are you good swimmers?"

"Pretty good."

"Do you think you can swim the Atlantic?"

"Sure!"

"Well. It's your funeral, not mine. If you're willing to risk it, I'll give you my permission."

After six weeks of ceaseless labor I heaved a sigh of relief

and deposited the imposing stack of our legal documents with the Gestapo in Cracow. I returned to Warsaw positive that we would soon be granted permission to leave the General Gouvernement.

May and June 1941

by HANIA

WHILE Gaither was collecting the documents for our trip, Pola and I were busy packing up. Except for a few table and bed linens, everything had to be left. Rugs, curtains, china, and pictures were packed into boxes and crates, though I had no hope of ever seeing these things again. Only the silver worried me. We could not take it with us on account of its weight. It was old-fashioned, and I was not especially attached to it, but it had been handed down from generation to generation, and I hated the idea of Germans getting it.

"Let's bury it," Gaither suggested. The idea was not easy to carry out. We had no garden in the city and had to find a secluded spot on the outskirts of Warsaw where we could dig a large hole without being seen. We placed the flat silver in large jars such as are used in Poland for making dill pickles, and sealed the jars with wooden disks and tar. We sneaked out one evening with a shovel and the silver in two suitcases. While Pola and I kept guard, Gaither dug. By the time we had finished, it was dark.

"Try to remember the landmarks," said Gaither. "See this little tree? Go and count the paces. And this rock on the left."

I counted the paces and said I would remember, but I doubted whether I could ever find the exact location again. Pola refused even to look.

"I don't want to know such a dangerous secret. If they beat me or break my fingers, I'm liable to give everything away. I'm rather sensitive to pain."

When everything was packed I set out for Bory to get Mimi. The trip was always an adventure, and I was glad that at least

as far as Cracow I would be traveling with Gaither. The ban on traveling had just been lifted, and thousands of Poles were crowding the railroads.

The coaches were antiquated models. Each compartment was a separate unit, each opened directly on the tracks. I stopped at one that was overflowing with people and baggage, and I pleaded, "Oh, please, Gaither, let's turn back. I can't get on."

A man leaned out. "Let's give the girl a hand." He reached down, gripped me by the arm, and pulled me inside, suitcase and all.

I called, "Gaither! Gaither!" fearing we would be separated.

My rescuer asked, "Is that your husband? We'll have to help him too." Gaither was pulled in after me just as the train started to move. He fell between the legs and luggage of the passengers. Gaither said to me, "Maybe you could get in one of the baggage racks." They were crammed with bundles, a cage with two chickens, a sleeping child. The man who had helped us before—we learned he was a worker in a factory—shoved the man on his left hard against the wall, and said with an engaging grin, "Move over, brother. These city people are awful weaklings. If this dame doesn't sit down, she's liable to faint. And what will we do then?" They moved, and Gaither pushed, but I could not wedge myself in.

"It's no good," our protector concluded. "But what's the matter with my neighbor's knees? I have a grandmother and two boys on mine."

As I perched daintily on the knee, I thought how persecution had caused barriers to disappear. Our common suffering had opened the gates of understanding and kindness.

Between Warsaw and Cracow we saw blackened and twisted oil drums lying by the side of the tracks in many places. The workman, every time we passed them, would nudge me and say, "Good work, what? Not hard to guess who did it."

The underground, by now, was operating as a fully organized, nation-wide net. There was hardly a Pole who did not co-operate with it. Every man and woman had definite in-

structions on what to do in case of a German breakdown. Every underground post had its staff. Trained personnel was waiting to take over the administration of the country. We were sure there would be no chaos, no confusion.

In Bory I told Father and Mother, with a heavy heart, of our imminent departure. But Mother only said quietly, "Thank God. I'm so glad you've decided to go."

Father too was glad. "We are all doomed here," he said. "We are corpses on furlough, awaiting our turn to be killed. You must go, if only to tell the world what you have seen."

But Mimi cried. "I don't want to go, not without Granny and Grandfather and Aunt Christine. Are they coming too?"

I didn't know how to explain. We had tried to keep the knowledge of the arrests and deaths and harassments of our friends and neighbors from her. But when she continued to cry, Mother took her on her knee and told her simply, "You've got to leave, darling. If you stay, the Germans might arrest and kill Daddy and maybe Mother also."

Mimi stopped crying and looked at us with round, frightened eyes. "Like Mr. Majewski?"

"Yes, dear."

He was a neighbor who had been taken on Easter Sunday and had been killed in prison. We didn't know how Mimi had learned of his death.

We heard of the death of Edward Zielinska, who had brought us the first news about Joe. He had married a girl in New Market, and when he was drafted by the *Baudienst*, the German compulsory construction service, he had worked as a ditchdigger—a lowly position that assured him a measure of safety. His unit had been building a new road. Every day he had gone by train to his work, returning at six in the evening.

One Saturday morning the Gestapo came to his house. Mrs. Zielinska explained, "My husband will be back on the evening train. He is always home shortly after six." The men left, and she suddenly remembered that it was Saturday and that her

husband would be back at three. When he returned, she told him he had better go to find out what they wanted.

"I'll wait here. They'll come for me if they want me." He took the hoe and went into the garden.

The Germans came at six. "Where have you been hiding?" they shouted, and hit him over the face with a whip. The blood spurted from his nose and cut lip.

Mrs. Zielinska stoutly denied that he had been hiding. "He was right here in the garden all the time."

"And how did he get home? We watched the station, but didn't see him."

For a while he was held in the prison in New Market. When Mrs. Zielinska went with a package of clean linen and food, she asked for his dirty clothes. She was handed a small bundle. At home she unwrapped it. These rusty shapeless things—these stiff things like cardboard—could not be underwear. Then she understood. They were Edward's clothes, stiff and caked with dried blood.

One afternoon Christine answered a knock on the door. She came to me in an agitated state.

"A German, with a summons for you."

With pretended calm I went into the hall and took the official envelope. I was to appear the following morning at ten, in the foreigners' section of the district police in New Market. It would mean getting up at four in the morning to make the five o'clock train. Mother and Father got up to say goodbye. They kissed me hard, and we stood praying silently. We did not know what the summons might mean.

The railroad station was cold and dark, but filled with moving, shadowy figures. They were factory and railroad men employed in New Market. On the train I sat next to Mr. Wolanski, Irena's father.

"Do you have to get up so early every day?" I asked.

"Yes. We have to report for work at eight in the winter, at seven in the summer."

"But we'll be there in an hour. What will you do between six and eight?"

"Wait."

"Where?"

"Outdoors, or in the station. Now that it's warmer, it isn't so bad. But during the cold season——" He swore. "Psia krew!"

"And when do you get back?"

"On the eight o'clock. It should get us home by nine, but the trains don't run on time, as you know. It's bad when the snow comes. Last winter we often didn't get home until midnight, never before ten."

In the gray light of dawn the faces of the men around me were green with fatigue and sleeplessness. Clothes were rags. All carried small packages done up in newspaper—a piece of bread—their lunch and supper.

"If only a man could eat properly," said Mr. Wolanski. "But what can you get with what they pay us? I'm a skilled mechanic and get only 130 zlotys a month." A sack of potatoes was costing 75 zlotys in the country, 150 zlotys in the city. "The Germans and the *Volksdeutsche* make much more at the same job."

"But the Germans need workmen. Couldn't you appeal to the governor?"

"We sent a delegation to him. I was one of the delegates. He said, 'You are right, for working men your pay is not sufficient. But for slaves it is too high.' He had us thrown out."

While waiting for the offices to open I went to the Bolkos. Mrs. Bolkowa and Lila were working in the kitchen. Lila was polishing two pairs of riding boots. Her beautiful hands were stained, callused, and chilblained."

I asked her, "Whose boots are those?"

"The Germans'. Two of them are quartered with us. Mother and I would have left, but they said we could not take any of our belongings. We decided to stay. They have the apartment, and we are living in the maid's room."

"But the work?"

"One can get used to almost anything," said Mrs. Bolkowa.

"The only thing I hate," said Lila, "is to clean up the floor

when they get sick. They drink like fish and do not always get to the bathroom in time."

At the police station, where I appeared summons in hand, nothing unusual happened. The pock-marked official who examined my passport signed it and stamped it with the usual "purple cock" (we all in Poland used this term to designate the German spread eagle). Then he started on an amicable conversation, and revealed his intention to call on us in the country. This I discouraged, saying that it was risky since I had tuberculosis. When I came home I was greeted by the family as one resurrected from the dead.

While waiting to hear from Gaither about our departure, I helped Mother and Christine in the garden. It was harder than ever to get seeds and labor. Gladly I helped; in a little while I would be unable to do anything more for them.

There was one duty, however, that I dreaded and postponed as long as I could. It concerned Abdulla. The sores on his body had spread, his skin hung in loose folds on his huge frame, and he neither ate nor slept. The veterinary, Mr. Godfrejow, said a cure was out of the question since the proper food and medicaments were not to be had. We asked him to put the dog out of his misery.

"It's impossible to get the drugs to put him to sleep. You'll have to have him shot. Maybe a German will do it for you."

Father denied himself everything trying to save Abdulla. He would pretend lack of appetite so he could feed him his own portions of food.

Father would have to be spared. I enlisted the aid of Ir, who found a German private willing for a fee to do the shooting.

After lunch, while Father was taking his nap, I called the dog.

"A walk, Abdulla?" He feebly wagged his tail. My hands shook so, I could hardly fasten the leash on his collar. We crossed the bridge, and there in the field beyond were Lola, Ir, and the soldier. I started to run away, but Ir caught up with us. "Come, Hania, it's got to be done. He's suffering." He took the leash out of my hand.

Abdulla, his tail between his legs, followed him after first looking at me questioningly, and they disappeared behind a clump of trees. Lola took me by the hand. Suddenly I ran after them. I was not going to let them do it. At that moment three shots rang out.

The German came for his pay. He was very young and boyish. When he saw my face, he laughed. "*Ach, was! Das war doch nur ein Hund.*" ("But it was only a dog.")

Father, Mother, and Christine, under dripping umbrellas, were smiling, waving goodbye. The train left the station, and I stood at the window, looking at the mountains, the river, our white house on the hill. Mimi scrambled to her feet on the seat beside me and dabbed at my face with her gloves.

"Don't cry, Mummie. Granny and Grandpa will have more to eat now that we're gone. I told them they could have all my milk."

When she grew restless and begged for a story, I sat down. We were the only passengers in our compartment save for a short, stocky fellow in a hunting jacket and patent leather shoes. When I glanced at him, he grinned broadly, showing two rows of gold teeth. I looked away. But the next time I turned my head in his direction, he jumped to his feet, scraped them together, bowed from the waist, and introduced himself. "My name is Szkaradek."

I felt like answering rudely, but restrained myself, and after a cold nod turned my back on him.

After "Little Red Riding Hood," "Puss in Boots," and "Tom Thumb," Mimi announced, "I'm hungry." I took out the sandwiches, so lovingly prepared by Mother. Our fellow passenger, as if anxious to keep us company, took a large package out of his suitcase. He glanced at our bread and cottage cheese sandwiches, then shoved at me something lying on a greasy piece of paper.

"Allow me."

I drew back, but a tantalizing odor reached my nose. Fresh, smoked, country sausage! I hadn't seen any for two years.

Mimi sniffed like a little dog, then said ecstatically, "Goody, goody. I love sausage."

I accepted the gift. It was followed by another greasy paper with a thick slice of cooked ham on it. I grabbed it greedily without a moment's hesitation. Although I firmly declined when Mr. Szkaradek pushed a bottle of vodka across the bench, the ice was broken and conversation flowed freely.

There was no reticence about our companion. Within ten minutes I knew that he was the only son of a farmer and the father of three children. His wife's dowry had been 6,000 zlotys. She was quarrelsome but a good housekeeper. He was a butcher and still plying his trade—in secret because butchering was strictly prohibited. He had a home in New Market. I made a mental note of the address, for one could never tell—Thanks to his illegal tidbits, he had found favor in the eyes of some *Volksdeutsche* and had been promised a job in a soldiers' rest home. He was on his way to Cracow to take a cook's examination. The job would be lucrative and would safeguard him from deportation to Germany.

By the time we reached Tarnow, where we had to change trains, he also knew a great deal about us—about Gaither, Mother, and Father and our financial difficulties. That a slice of ham could prove such a short cut to friendship! When the train stopped, we said goodbye to this friendly person whom Mimi called "the sausage man."

I opened the window to lean out. "Redcap! Redcap!"

A railroad man called out, "Save your breath, lady. No redcaps. If you're taking the Cracow train, better carry them yourself. And hurry! The train's waiting on Track No. 2."

What should I do? There were two large bags, two small ones, a traveling rug, and Mimi. I was tugging at the heaviest bag when Mr. Szkaradek wafted back. He picked up Mimi and one of the large suitcases and galloped away. I rushed after him. "Mimi! My child! My bag!" Was the man a kidnaper? I ran after him, but he vanished in the underground passage. In five minutes he reappeared. "Quick," he called. "I have places for you."

He thrust one of the small bags in my hand and grabbed the rest of my luggage. Racing after him, I was ashamed of my first snobbishness, of my suspicions!

On the Cracow train, Mimi's benevolent "sausage man" treated us to more of his products, then he said, "Better make the little girl lie down while it's light, and you can see to make her comfortable. And try to get some sleep yourself." He fetched a sheepskin jacket from his suitcase in the adjoining compartment and spread it out on the hard seat for Mimi to lie on. A little later he came to see how we were doing.

I was sleeping soundly when the train suddenly jerked to a standstill. We were standing in the midst of fields. After a long wait, we moved on, only to stop again in a little while. Passengers were asking questions in subdued voices.

"What's wrong?"

"Sabotage?"

Mr. Szkaradek poked his head in our door and lit a match. "There has been a wreck on the line," he whispered. "They say two troop trains ran into each other between Bochnia and Cracow. But don't worry, I'll see to it that you don't get lost." I knew that he meant it.

We crept forward. Then we were standing still again, and German conductors were going through the coaches shouting, "*Alle raus! Sofort umsteigen!*" ("Everybody off! Transfer immediately!")

It was pitch-dark, and no one had a flashlight or a candle. I groped for Mimi's shoes, which were somewhere under the bench. People with bundles and bags pushed and jostled me. Mimi was crying loudly.

"Mr. Szkaradek!" I shouted desperately.

"Here I am!"

"I can't find Mimi's gloves and shoes."

He found them, then said, "Come. Let's get off."

"You take Mimi. I'll take what I can and just let the rest go."

"Nonsense," he said. "Wouldn't Pan Pastor be mad if you got home without your bags? Hang on to the small pieces. I'll take care of the rest."

He disappeared, came back with two men, and gave each of them one of my heavy bags. He took Mimi and the blanket. We felt our way into the corridor and to the entrance. It was as dark outside as inside, and the rain was coming down in torrents.

"Follow me," Mr. Szkaradek called out, and the next moment he and Mimi were gone. I descended the three steps, holding a bag in each hand. Then I cautiously put my foot forward, feeling for the ground. Nothing but empty space. I stretched one leg down into space, but it only dangled. Then a railroad man ran by, and in the light of his lantern, I saw that we were standing on a high embankment. I would have to jump at least five feet. The man with the light was gone, and I dived into total darkness. I fell into a ditch, and cold mud splashed into my face. Crowds were hurrying to the front of the train, shepherded by armed soldiers who were shouting, "*Vorwärts! Schnell!*" ("Move on! Quick!")

My two little bags seemed as heavy as lead. I fell over torn wires, railroad sleepers, and stones. The sticky mud of the plowed field sucked at my shoes. Rain trickled down my face, I fell again and cut my hand on something sharp. It hurt, and I burst into tears. I thought I could not take another step. Just then somebody said, "*Erlauben Sie.*" ("Permit me.") One of the bags was snatched out of my hand. The soldier who had taken it was a private—I knew it by the characteristic smell of his army boots. I had been robbed, but I didn't care. In fact, I was glad to be rid of one of my burdens. Now I could move more swiftly, and half a mile farther on I reached the place of the accident.

The tracks had been torn up for about two hundred yards, and ties and rails, grotesquely twisted, stuck up in the air. Beyond, in the light of kerosene flares, I saw the mangled shapes of two locomotives on their sides, and several telescoped cars. I came at last to the train that was to take us on to Cracow. But how was I to find Mimi and Szkaradek? I underestimated my new friend. I had passed only the first coach when he grabbed me by the arm. "This way!"

Mimi was sitting in a coach, snugly wrapped in the blanket and munching a piece of sausage, and my two big bags were under the benches. I wiped the mud off my face. Just then a head in a German field cap appeared at the door and a pocket light was flashed in my face. The soldier exclaimed, "*Ach, da sind Sie!*" ("Ah, there you are!") He deposited the suitcase I thought he had stolen and disappeared with a friendly smile.

It was four in the morning when we reached Cracow and Szkaradek put us on the Warsaw train.

While waiting for the Gestapo headquarters in Cracow to send us the permission to leave we put finishing touches to our packing and made final arrangements about our apartment. The Najders were to take it, and we made the transfer of ownership without delay so the German housing bureau would not put Germans in it as soon as we had gone. Stripped of rugs, curtains, and most of the furniture, our home looked empty and bleak.

The food situation was bad. Not only was it difficult to obtain even skimmed milk for Mimi every day, but it was hard to find an adequate amount of cabbage and potatoes for our small household. There were no fresh vegetables except radishes. Like everybody else, we ate them morning, noon, and night, without stilling our hunger.

The house was cold and damp. When the weather grew warmer, I took Mimi out for long walks every day. We usually went to the Botanical Gardens, the only park still accessible to Poles. On week days it was quiet and almost deserted, since few could pay the small admission fee levied at the gate. The lilacs—the famous lilac trees—were now in full bloom. Mimi played in the sand while I darned socks on a bench. As I sat there one day, two German officers stopped in front of the flower-covered trees. One was an older man, with a fine, sensitive face. It was good to see a German whose eyes could grow soft looking at flowers. But in a second I saw his features distorted with fury. Two small children, playing hide-and-seek, had come running past him, and one of them, a pale little girl,

fell against him. He struck the child a sharp blow on the head, and exclaimed contemptuously, "Polish ragamuffin!"

One day Mrs. Sommer came to our house. She was greatly changed. Her thin face had the translucence and the color of wax and she had lost several front teeth.

"How in the world did you get here?" I asked.

"There are several passages where, for a bribe, you can slip out of the ghetto. It's always a risk, but I had to do it. We are starving. I brought a few things to sell. I'll buy some bread with the money."

She gave me a letter signed by Mrs. Rozowska, a member of our Warsaw congregation.

"Is she in the ghetto? I didn't know she had Jewish blood."

"Her mother's parents were Jews," said Mrs. Sommer. "They arrested her in December. She was robbed of everything, beaten, and kept in the jail on Danilowiczowska Street. She's now living in one room with twelve other people. She can't last very long."

How this fastidious woman must be suffering. I could not put her out of my mind. If only I could take some money for food to our friends in the ghetto.

At that time there was one streetcar line that ran from the Christian quarter through Bielanska Street and straight through the ghetto. Though the cars were not to stop in the Jewish quarter, I knew that sometimes people bribed the motorman to slow down enough for them to jump off. Once inside the ghetto, I could ask my friends to show me one of the secret passages.

One morning I put some extra money in my handbag for our friends in the ghetto, and without telling Gaither of my intentions (I was afraid he would oppose my taking such a risk), I got on the streetcar. I winked at the conductor, and he did not collect my fare. This was in keeping with a tacit understanding between Polish passengers and streetcar conductors. The passengers, knowing that the conductors were compelled by the Germans to work for a meager wage, instead of paying their fare when boarding a car, would hold the

coin in readiness—in case a German inspector was present. On alighting, they would slip the coin not into the fare pouch but into the conductor's own pocket.

I stood on the rear platform. The car passed through the closely guarded gates and entered the Jewish section. Inside, the people I saw, with their clothes loose over their wasted bodies, their faces strangely yellow, looked like scarecrows. The streets were crowded with pedestrians. There was not a vehicle of any sort. One woman was carrying a basket filled with kindling, probably her chopped-up furniture, judging by the marks of veneer and finish. A couple stood guard in front of a wooden cage made of strong bars and fastened with a padlock. As I watched, the man unlocked it, took out a small, dark loaf of bread, cut off a thin slice, and sold it to a woman. Then he locked the bread up again. A few children were playing in the dust and rubble of ruins. They played apathetically. Others sat motionless, with their eyes closed, along the walls and curbs. They looked like corpses. Some lay on the ground, in twos, or in groups of five and six. Their skin was the color of dry clay, their temples and eyes were like deep holes, their elbows and knees stuck out like tumors on their wizened arms and legs. A few still stirred, many were already dead. I noticed corpses of adults lying by the curb, some of them covered with brown wrapping paper. A woman's corpse lay under some newspapers which were fluttering in the wind. The feet, rigidly stretched out, were pointing towards the streetcar. Some passers-by stepped over the corpse as I watched. They hardly glanced down, and I knew that to them this was a usual sight. Mrs. Sommer had told me that a hearse circulated all day through the ghetto to pick up these bodies, which families too poor for a burial would put out on the street in order to get a free interment.

The streetcar had not slowed down and I had not been able to get off. A policeman was standing next to the motorman. At the opposite end of the ghetto, we left through another gate. Directly beyond the wall enclosing the ghetto was the first stop, and I got off.

I leaned against the lamppost, waiting for a car to take me back. A peasant woman joined me. But there was no streetcar in sight, and she sat down on the curb, took a piece of black bread out of her pocket, and began to eat.

Half a block down the street was the communal bathhouse. Though it served the Jews, it had been left out of the ghetto. A small group was coming out. Seven Jewish children were being led by policemen. It was impossible to tell whether these children were boys or girls. They had probably been deloused at the bathhouse, for their heads were shaved. Their arms and legs were so thin that they seemed disproportionately long. Their heads—enormous in contrast to the emaciated necks—wobbled with weakness. Their clothes were shapeless rags, their faces masks. One of the children sighted the woman on the curb. In a moment, with a shrill cry, the tragic band was swarming over the eating woman in a jumble of spidery arms and legs.

"Bread, bread. A little piece for me."

The woman got to her feet, raised her arms high. "Wait a minute," she cried. "You may have it." She broke the bread into small pieces and distributed it. But when all the bread was gone, there was one child who had received nothing. He clasped his clawlike hands together, threw back his head, eyes shut fast, jawbones almost visible under the tightly drawn skin, and howled like an animal. So bloodcurdling was this sound that I came near fainting.

Behind me stood three German privates. They had witnessed this scene. What were they thinking? I looked at them with a terrible curiosity. One was calmly lighting a cigarette; his indifference was complete. The second had pain and pity in his face. The third, hands in his pockets and head thrown back, laughed heartily.

The permission from the Gestapo was not forthcoming. Time trickled slowly by as we waited. On May 15 our household increased, for Alina Izycza, a deportee, came to live with us temporarily, till she could find a job.

Alina was living in Plock when the Germans liquidated the Old People's Home in that city. She had an aunt in the institution. In the first days of January, 1940, the inmates had been told to get ready for the health commission that was to examine them and give them medical aid. They had looked forward with trepidation to the appointed day, January 16. But instead of doctors and nurses, S.S. troops arrived. Forty-two old people who had reported were loaded into trucks, taken to a near-by forest, and shot. The more wary had not gone; they had escaped.

Cripples and small children were executed with the old folks when institutions in Makow and Rozanna were wiped out. Some of the cripples had been brought before the supposed health commission in pushcarts and wheelbarrows by friends and relatives anxious to get treatment for them.

But that had been more than a year ago, and there was plenty right now to worry us. There was unrest among the Germans, who were nervous and mean as wasps. Every day brought fresh executions and arrests. On the way to the Botanical Gardens with Mimi, I always hurried by the outlet of Szucha Avenue. I did not want Mimi to see the police vans that carried prisoners to and from the Gestapo.

May ended and we were still waiting.

One evening Gaither and I sat on the balcony. The June night was warm and fragrant with the blooms of chestnut and locust trees. It would be wonderful to take a walk in Ujazdowskie Avenue or Lazienki Park. But the park was only for Germans, and it was past curfew, so we went to bed. The street below the open windows was quiet; only the measured tread of the distant patrol could be heard.

Suddenly light steps approached, then hobnailed boots. A harsh voice shouted: "Halt!" The lighter feet stopped.

"*Ausweis!*" ("Identification card!") We couldn't hear the answer.

"*Ach, so!*" A sound like a heavy blow followed, then a tussle, then a shot. A silence. Then a moan and a cough. It was a peculiar cough, short and shallow, ending in a gurgling

sound. It repeated itself at short intervals. The heavy, measured steps receded towards Marszalkowska Street. We ran to the window and leaned out to peer into the street five stories below. We could see nothing, and Gaither said, "There is nothing we can do. We can't go out into the street, they'd shoot us. Poor devil, they got him through the lungs."

We were shaking with the horror of it. A cab drove up, and people picked up the wounded man, then drove off.

Someone rang, and Gaither let in a young man. He was fair, blue-eyed, about twenty-four. He wore gray flannel trousers, a belted raincoat, no hat. "*Parlez-vous français, monsieur?*" he asked.

Gaither does not speak French, so I joined them as interpreter.

"I am a French officer," said the stranger. "I've escaped from a prisoner-of-war camp near Poznan and am trying to get back to France. I arrived in Warsaw this morning and am very tired. A friend told me that Mr. Warfield is an American. Could you put me up for a night or two?"

"But you are going in the wrong direction if you're heading for France. You should have turned west!" I said.

"The French border is too well guarded. I'm trying to go through Russia."

His explanation was plausible, for there were scores of Allied officers hiding in Poland. His French was perfect. Yet I had the feeling that something was amiss. My first impulse was to extend hospitality, but I held back. Stalling for time, I asked questions at random.

"What part of France did you come from?"

"Paris." He gave an address.

I asked about his family. He said he had a mother and two sisters. This was getting stupid, but I still went on asking.

"Are you a Roman Catholic, *monsieur*?"

"*Non, madame. Je suis évangélique.*"

Something clicked in my mind. The man was lying. If he

were a Frenchman he would say *protestant*. Only a German would use the word *évangélique* (*evangelisch*).

Seeing that Gaither, to whom I had explained the conversation, was about to speak, I quickly said to the stranger, "Will you excuse us for a minute? I'd like to talk this over with my husband. There is no room for you in our home, but we might think of friends."

He gave me a sharp glance and bowed politely. In the study I was telling Gaither of my discovery when the entrance door slammed. Our guest had taken his leave.

Later the janitor's wife stopped me. "Excuse me, madam, did three young men come to see you this afternoon?"

"No, only one did."

"Funny," she said. "There were three who inquired about you. They used German among themselves, but the one who spoke to me also knew Polish. He wore a belted raincoat."

Major Vincent Orlik, a friend of ours, had been arrested in October. Josephine, his wife, who had come up from the country, told us that he had been sent from prison to prison, then to a temporary camp near Tarnow and lately to Oswiecim. "I have heard," she said, "that there are people who have some pull with the Gestapo and who will, for money, get a man out."

One day she came triumphant. "There is a woman here who knows an influential Austrian. She thinks that for less than 3,000 zlotys we can get Vincent released."

"Josephine," I said, "do be careful. There are blackmailers who will make promises and take all your money. Are you sure this woman is all right?"

"Quite sure. She is an old lady and doesn't want a thing for herself. All the money goes to the Austrian. Of course, it'll take some time. First I have to give her 200 zlotys for expenses. It's very little. The balance when Vincent is released."

Josephine had to go back to her three small children in the country, and I agreed to be her go-between. She gave me an

address. It was not the address of the Old Lady—as we began to call her—but of the Old Lady's agent.

As soon as Josephine sent me the 200 zlotys, I took them to the agent—a young woman who looked like a schoolteacher. Although I had expected someone more mature, more heroic-looking, I liked her from the first.

When I had told her who sent me, she said, "My name is Rose. In case you are asked why you came here, say you came to buy whisky from me. You see, it's illegal, but better than for anyone to suspect a political motive. And remember that you've known me for a long time. Remember, we met in Krynica, way back in 1934." Rose promised to keep me informed. "But," she explained, "I'm only the agent. The Old Lady is my boss. She's handling the job."

We arranged a way of keeping in touch with each other without arousing the suspicions of the police. We also talked about other things, and I could hardly wait to see Gaither.

"Rose said that one of our couriers has just come from Hungary," I told him. "On his way across the Russian-occupied territories he saw an enormous army standing on the Bug line, and he had to crawl through rows of antitank trenches and barbed-wire fences."

Gaither, who had heard similar rumors, said, "Maybe that's why the Germans in Berlin were talking about war with the Soviet Union. But Russia might want to attack first, now that Germany is so deeply involved in the West and in Africa."

Rumors spread, and the Soviet forces were variously evaluated. People said the Bug army numbered four, six, and more, million men. We hoped that our two invaders would come to grips with each other. The Germans, in whatever preparations they were making, were secretive, but we detected an unusual activity. Poles were again forbidden to travel—a sign that the lines were being kept open for troops. At night we often got up and watched the long columns of army trucks winding through the streets. It was impossible to see what they were carrying, for they were closely covered with tarpaulin. Night after night houses shook as the trucks rumbled by. People

speculated and split into camps. Some maintained, like Gaither, that these preparations, though significant, did not have an immediate action for their aim. Others, including me, felt sure that something would happen very shortly.

On Saturday, June 21, my feelings became convictions. That Saturday morning Mimi and I, on our way to the Botanical Garden, were detained at one crossing by a long stream of field artillery. Excited M.P.'s posted along the street were directing the movements of the military.

Coming back at noon, we had to wait for another long convoy to pass. I burst into the study, where Gaither was talking with Bruno. "Gates, the miracle is happening. Hitler is getting ready to attack the Soviet Union."

Gaither was unimpressed. "Don't get excited. It would be suicide for Germany to take on another enemy at this time."

His calm made me angry. "I know what I'm talking about." Then I turned to Bruno. "Here is some money. Will you please buy me all the flour, cereal, and sugar you can find in the black market? We'll starve if they start bombing the railroads, or if there is another siege."

He placidly promised, and I went to impart the news to Pola. She had more faith in my intuition.

Again trucks rumbled all night. Towards morning a steady drone woke me up, and I saw droves of airplanes flying to the east. I woke Gaither.

"Gosh, don't you ever sleep?" he asked disgustedly.

"But Gates," I exclaimed, "look at all those planes!"

"Just maneuvers. Do get under the covers before you catch pneumonia."

When we got up there wasn't a cloud in the sky and the streets looked very quiet and almost gay in the sunshine. It was Sunday, and I could see people going in and out of the church on the square. I noticed how few Germans were about.

After lunch, Gaither, Mimi, and I went to the Botanical Garden. It was full of people. We found a bench near the fountain and sat in the sun. Mimi fed the sparrows, children were playing all around us, an old woman next to me was

dozing, Gaither was reading. Suddenly someone pointed to the sky, and shouted, "Look!"

There, high against the cloudless blue, was a rapidly flying airplane letting out a jet of white smoke in a long spiral dazzling white in the sunshine. The plane disappeared to the west towards the center of the city.

A well-remembered whine and an explosion rent the air. Another and another followed. More planes were flying very high, and we heard more detonations.

In the garden panic broke out. People were running. Children crawled under benches and bushes. The old woman next to me whimpered, "What shall I do? I can't run."

I clutched Mimi with one hand, took the woman by the arm with the other hand. Gaither collected some crying children who had been separated from their mothers. Shepherd-ing our little group, we made for the exit. But at the gate we stopped. There were no more planes, and everything was normal. It seemed absurd to run.

Three frantic mothers rushed up, overjoyed to find their children. Many people were leaving.

"We seem to have got unnecessarily excited," said Gaither. "They must have been German planes, and the noise couldn't have been bombs."

"Let's go back," said Mimi. "I want to feed my little birds." We walked back to the bench.

Two more explosions shook the air, and then the blood-curdling scream of an air-raid siren sounded. In the street an open army car swooshed by. All of a sudden I realized that across from the park were the S.S. barracks.

"Goodness! If the Russians are bombing, they'll go first after the barracks."

This time we really ran. Gaither picked Mimi up, and we raced home. When we reached the Methodist Building we found the entrance full of people gazing up into the sky. Two of them were German privates, green with fright. To me it was such a wonderful sight to see frightened Germans that

I almost could have welcomed the whole Red Army with open arms.

After the all-clear, we all went mad with excitement. We ran around shaking hands, slapping friends and strangers on the back, crying, "It's true. They're fighting. They'll cut each other's throats, and we'll be free."

Towards evening the Germans issued "Extras," and we learned that they had attacked at dawn. "The victorious German Army is forging ahead." The number of destroyed Soviet tanks, planes, and divisions was announced.

The next day Bruno brought the news that the first bomb we had heard had wounded many, among them our friends the Jellineks. Dr. and Mrs. Jellinek were taking a stroll with their three-year-old son, when the bomb dropped about ten yards from them. All three were in Evangelical Hospital. Many pieces of shrapnel had been removed from Dr. Jellinek's abdominal cavity. His wife had suffered only contusions and minor wounds, but little Tommy had lost a leg.

We could not eat our lunch, but were sitting at the table when Pola came in with a letter brought by a policeman. It was a summons from the Gestapo. Gaither was ordered to appear at once at Szucha Avenue.

"I'm going with you," I exclaimed. "Just let me get my hat."

I knew I would not be able to endure the suspense if I stayed at home. Was it something connected with the church? Was it an arrest?

At the Gestapo, despite the urgency of the summons, we found the indicated room closed. An orderly said the Kommissar was at a meeting and told us to wait. We waited for three hours, sitting silently beside each other. The longer I waited, the more terrifying were the suppositions that whirled in my mind. I had no doubt Gaither was going to be arrested.

A tall, dapper officer appeared. We got up, and Gaither presented the summons.

"Ah, Herr Superintendent, I'd forgotten about you. These tedious meetings. I'm sorry to have kept you waiting. The matter is really unimportant. I wanted to ask you a few ques-

tions about your church, but it's late now. Could you come back tomorrow?"

He bowed politely and disappeared.

I was dizzy. I felt like laughing and crying at the same time. Outside I suddenly felt limp. Wave after wave of nausea swept me. I got sick in full view of the Gestapo, to my mortification.

Innumerable hospitals appeared all over Warsaw in the next few days. They were in requisitioned school buildings, in office buildings, even in private homes. A section of the gutted Ministry of War, just around the corner from our street, was hastily repaired and converted into a lazaret. The first casualties coming in created a sensation. It became a favorite pastime for the inhabitants of Warsaw to watch the German wounded being taken off trains and loaded into ambulances.

In the excitement that followed the twenty-second of June, we almost forgot our permission, but when, at the end of the month, we were still in the dark, we went to the local Gestapo. They knew nothing about it. The man to whom Gaither addressed his query said, "It's a good thing you're planning to leave. You are No. 1 on our list if hostages are taken, or if we have to make arrests among Americans." He looked at us with amusement.

Gaither, seeing that this long wait was depressing me, suggested one day, "Let's take the afternoon off and have a good walk."

"All right, but where shall we go?"

"Oh," he said, "let's go and look at the wounded Germans."

On the lawn behind the high, wrought-iron fence that surrounded the grounds of the former Ministry of War, men sat in hospital garb. Some had their arms in slings, others hobbled on crutches, a few wore bandages on their heads—all of them lighter cases.

"Well," said Gaither, "after all, the badly wounded can't be expected to roam around."

Several of the wounded men came up and leaned against the fence, curiously looking at the crowd on the street. The way

they clutched the bars made me think they were glad of this protection. The Poles stood motionless, their faces blank, their eyes staring. The tension between the two groups, facing each other in complete silence across the iron pickets, was high-strung.

Gaither said, "Some day a remedy might be found for sclerosis, cancer, or even old age, but who will ever find a cure for such hatred?"

The next day we had a letter from Cracow. It was brief: "The Headquarters of the Gestapo have refused you permission to leave the General Gouvernement." A few words canceled our expectation of returning to America before the end of the war. Evidently the Germans still hoped that the United States would remain neutral. It would never do for witnesses like us, of the New Order in Europe, to escape at this time.

"Now our arrest is but a question of time," said Gaither. "It would be best to get ready immediately."

With our return to America in view, I had given little consideration to my clothes. Now that we had to stay, it was a different matter. Gaither was fairly well equipped for a term in prison, but my clothes were worn out. I decided to buy a dress, and then we would leave for Bory to get ourselves in good shape physically with fresh air, sunshine, and rest.

Theoretically, rationed clothing could be bought if one had a special permit, but it was said that the person who had received such a document had not yet been born. I went to the city ration bureau. The line of applicants stretched for a block. Meekly I took my place at the end. I stood from eight in the morning until one. The next day I stood again. This time the line edged closer to the door, and the third day I found myself inside the building. More days of standing. Finally I reached the third floor—and the desk where an application blank was handed me. The clerks were browbeaten, hungry-looking Polish girls, but the decision depended on a German. Carefully I filled out line after line of my form. Name, address, birthplace, age, race, nationality, religion, occupation of hus-

band, and the requested article. I placed my signature at the bottom and handed the paper back with a sigh of relief. The girl took it into an inner office with my passport, but after a while an irate official came out. He said severely, "You haven't filled out all the lines. You haven't given a motive for your request."

This was the last straw! Hadn't I proved, standing day after day, through rain and sunshine, that I needed a dress? Exasperated, I wrote out in the allotted space, under the heading Motive for the Request, "Lack of fig leaves." Defiantly I handed back the sheet, expecting to be hit over the head for my insolence.

But the German only grunted, "*Na gut*" ("All right"), and stamped the paper. Then he threw the petition to one of the girls, who filed it. I was told to come back for an answer in eight days. Fully expecting a refusal, but determined to carry out my experiment to the end, I went on the appointed day. A permit to buy three yards of goods was handed to me.

But my triumph was of short duration, for although Gaither, Pola, Bruno, Mrs. Latinek, and I searched the city high and low, singly and in groups, we never found an inch of material. At last we gave up, and after packing our remaining possessions we telegraphed Father and Mother to expect us. Mimi, when we told her we were going back to Bory, was in her seventh heaven. Of course she had forgotten what she had been told would await us if we did not return to America, and we did not remind her of it.

Back on the hill, we exchanged greetings and news. We learned that Dr. Ludwik, our country physician, had been arrested. Old Gardon's son had also been taken; he had been shot.

"Let's not talk about these things," I said to Mother and Father, "not for a few days at least. All we want is rest and peace."

But in a small community like Bory news travels fast, and

we were still unpacking when a messenger brought a letter from the mayor.

"Dear Friends," he wrote. "Have just had a phone call from the Gestapo. They know of your arrival and enjoin me to tell you that, being American citizens, you can't stay here. You will have to leave for Warsaw within the next twenty-four hours."

July 1941

by GAITHER

THE mayor's note was a crushing blow. I ran to town to ask him whether it hadn't been a cruel joke or a mistake. He was genuinely distressed, but explained that it was against German regulations to have foreigners living so close to the border. I returned home and told Hania that we would have to appeal to the Gestapo Kommissar himself. Maybe if he understood that we had come here every summer for the last thirteen years and were well known by the entire population, he would relent.

So, the next morning, instead of taking a train back to Warsaw, we went in the opposite direction, one stop up the line, to the headquarters of the Gestapo for our district.

Before the war this village had been a popular summer resort. Now the hotels and boarding houses were either empty—looted and their windows broken—or occupied by convalescing German soldiers. The Gestapo was in one of the best of the hotels.

For twenty minutes we waited. Then the door opened, and the absolute master of the life and freedom of our district walked in. Hania explained our case.

"You can't stay. It's against the regulations. Go back where you came from," he said brutally.

Hania began to cry. "We have nothing to go back to. We've closed our home."

He repeated that it was against regulations, but Hania continued to plead and cry. Her tears made me impatient. Couldn't she see that nothing would soften this heavy-set, heavy-jowled satrap? I was mistaken. Her strategy must have been good, for quite unexpectedly the scowling despot said, "Oh, well. You don't have to go back to Warsaw. Go anywhere, just so you are seven miles away from the border."

This opened up all sorts of possibilities. "Could we move to Ruda?" I asked. This little village was seven miles from Bory on the railroad line.

He consented. He also magnanimously allowed us two days to make arrangements.

In the heavy rain now falling we splashed our way home. Whispering to each other, we made some plans. At five the next morning we took the train to Ruda, and there we rented a room—a simple, white-washed peasant's *izba*, with straw sacks instead of mattresses on the beds. We knew we would not spend much time there. We went to the local police and registered as residents. Then we explained our predicament to our landlords. They promised to co-operate. "You spend a few nights here, and don't worry. In case they come, we'll say you've gone for a walk. Then we'll send one of the boys on his bicycle to warn you, and you can come back on the next train."

That night we slept in our new home, but the next day we went back to the house on the hill. For two weeks we went to Ruda every other night, but once the news had spread among the local population that we were permanent residents, Hania did not trouble any more to commute, and I went only two nights a week. I took walks in the village. The little huts strung along the unlit streets almost seemed uninhabited. The only point where there was movement and color was the railroad station. Many trains passed through, bringing troops from Hungary to the eastern front. Sometimes they stopped, and the Hungarians got off to stretch their legs or get a drink of water. I always took this opportunity to talk to them. Some of them knew a few words of Polish; with

others I had to use the sign language. These swarthy fellows were simple peasants and very friendly towards me, whom they took for a Pole.

One evening a long troop train stopped, and the local railroad man told me it would stay overnight. I watched the soldiers prepare their evening meal. Many of them were Ruthenians. Their language was very similar to Polish, and I had little difficulty in conversing with them. I walked over to one, a young fair-haired peasant.

"Why are you in the army?" I asked.

"They drafted me."

"Are you glad you are going to war?"

"Hell!" he spit on the ground.

"Are you a Communist?"

"No, but I have nothing against the Russians."

Another one said, "Neither do I. And why should I fight anybody? I have a wife and kids at home."

"What are you going to do when they send you to the front?" I asked.

They laughed and put up their hands in a gesture of surrender.

All summer, in preparation for that which we knew to be unavoidable—our arrest—I learned to darn and patch, to wash and iron. Hania wrote out instructions on how to care for my clothes, how to wash using the least amount of soap. I learned to bend over a washboard and to iron my shirts, which according to the family I would have to do in prison.

Summer 1941

by *HANIA*

LIFE went on in the usual way: we hunted for food, did housekeeping, darned, and worked in the garden. We found a way of combining work with hygiene, and the saving of clothes with sunbathing: we did the hoeing, weeding, and watering of the garden clad in bathing suits. Lola and her husband followed our example. This innovation aroused indignation. The peasants would stop by the hedge and grumble about such indecent exposure while tilling God's own soil! Evidently, though, the costumes were all right with the Lord, for that summer we were rewarded with a bumper crop.

We were watched by the police. Repeatedly we were summoned to the district Gestapo in New Market, where our passports were examined and stamped each time. On one of these occasions we got hungry and looked for an eating place. The town was small, but it had had several restaurants in prewar days. Now most of them were closed, and others were accessible only to Germans. After inquiring around, we finally found one, but it was crowded with waiting people. But Gaither said, "Look, there is another room over there, and I see a free table."

And, indeed, parting a heavy, red plush curtain, he led me into a much smaller room where, of the four tables, only one was occupied. I nudged Gaither. Three Germans were sitting at it.

"So what?" muttered Gaither. "Let them sit. You don't have to look at them."

Waiting to be served, we drew out a Polish paper and sat reading it, and talking to each other in English. Again and again I felt the Germans from the adjoining table gaze at us intently. Each time I would lower my paper and stare back contemptuously.

An obsequious waiter approached. It was a meatless day,

and we ordered potato stew, but when we tasted it we almost choked.

"Gaither," I said, "do you see what I see? Real vegetables! And pieces of meat!"

This surprise was nothing compared with the vertigo that seized us when the bill was presented. It was so small that we asked the waiter if he hadn't made a mistake. On the threshold of the main room, I turned around to cast one more look at the place where we had had such a meal, and then my eyes bulged. There, pinned to the red plush, was a large sign, *Nur für Deutsche*.

On the street we leaned against each other shaking with laughter. Lila Bolkowna came up, and we told her how we had violated the sanctum sanctorum.

"Whew!" she said, "Even Germans avoid that room. It's only for the gentlemen of the Gestapo."

Father went several times to see Werle about Dr. Ludwik. At first Werle, influenced by his wife and Helga, did not want to intercede. Helga said, "If the doctor has been arrested, he must have done something. Let him take the consequences."

Even to Werle such a supposition seemed absurd. The doctor was a quiet man, a typical country general practitioner. Before his arrest, one could meet him day and night, walking the mountain paths with a stick in one hand and his medicine case in the other. With four thousand destitute peasants to look after, he could not possibly have been a Doctor Jekyl and a political Mr. Hyde. So Werle, overriding his wife's and daughter's protests, went to see the *Kreishauptmann* (prefect of the district). His intercession probably would have borne no fruit if the mayor, on his side, had not followed it up with substantial bribes.

Dr. Ludwik came back two months after his arrest. He narrowly missed the fate of sixty men who were executed a few hours after his release. In fact, he had been brought out with them that day into the prison yard. They had been told to leave their overcoats and hats behind, for they would not need them. They were lined up in front of waiting trucks.

While the first men were being loaded, a guard came for the doctor and led him to the prison office. There his release papers were given him. Although the next train for Bory wasn't due for two hours, he went straight to the station, where he sat down with his face in his hands. A heavy hand falling on his shoulder made him look up. Two uniformed Gestapo men were behind him.

"Come! It was a mistake. We are taking you back."

Ludwik got up without a word and took a few steps when peals of laughter from his captors brought him to a stop.

"Ha, ha, ha," they roared. "Wasn't that a good joke? We just wanted to see your face when you heard you were going back to prison."

Our woods and clearings were covered with berries of every kind. Peasant children, although the Germans forbade it, would pick them and bring them to the door. The berries were a welcome addition to our monotonous diet. One afternoon we bought several quarts of wild strawberries—in Bory they could be found all summer—and blueberries. We put them on the long shelf that ran the length of the back porch. There, covered with sieves, they would keep fresh until the next day.

That night we were awakened by a shot fired very close to the house, the thud of running feet, and shouting in German. But in a little while everything grew quiet, and we went back to sleep. In the morning I went to fetch a bowl of berries from the porch—but the shelf was empty. I called Christine and Mother, who sighed over our loss. The dishes could not be replaced.

"Three china bowls," groaned Mother.

"And a large enameled platter," added Christine gloomily.

Could it have been the gypsies we had seen on the road yesterday? I asked Stypula.

"Perhaps. But if they had them at first, they don't have them any more," he said cryptically.

I asked him to explain.

"I don't want it to get out that I told you," he said. I

promised it wouldn't, and he continued. "The dog was barking, and I went out to see why. I saw a man with a basket over his arm jumping over your fence. At the same moment a German patrol appeared from behind the hedge. They called, *Wer da?* and *Halt!* The man threw down the basket and skipped. The Germans fired once, but it was dark, and they did not bother to chase him. They picked up the basket, and as they passed my gate I heard something clattering inside."

That afternoon, as soon as I had finished the dishes, Gaither and I set out for the *Grenzschutz* (frontier guard) headquarters, three miles away. I took a shopping bag with me to carry the dishes back. We knocked at the guardhouse beside the road, and an older man—an Austrian and not unfriendly towards the Poles—came out. When I had explained, he beamed.

"*Jawohl!*" ("Yes indeed!") We have your dishes. Come up to the house with me, and I'll get them for you."

We followed him to the headquarters—once a summer hotel—but I was afraid to go inside, because under the stairs that led into the vestibule one of the terrible police dogs was growling in a makeshift cage. The enormous beast barked furiously at our approach and threw himself against the boards until they bent.

The Austrian disappeared. When he came back he was followed by a young officer in shirt sleeves and house slippers who spoke roughly.

"You can't have the dishes," he said. "How do I know they are yours?"

"They were picked up by the patrol at our gate when the thief dropped them, and I can describe them accurately."

"Have you made a formal report to the police?"

This took us aback. "No, I haven't. But I will if you say it is necessary."

"Of course it is necessary." He turned on his heels and left us.

The afternoon was very warm and we were tired, but we went to the police. It was the Polish police which, though partly reinstated by the Germans, had neither weapons nor

the least executive power. We made a formal complaint, and the clerk wrote out all the details and a full description of the stolen articles.

Lightheartedly, we went back the following day to the *Grenzschatz* house on the border. The same surly officer received us. We told him that all formalities had been satisfied.

"Where is the proof of your statement? Would you expect me to proceed on the strength of your word? You'll have to wait until I have been formally notified by the Polish police."

Several days went by, and we took another trip to the border, only to learn that so far no communication from the Polish police had been received.

Though we missed our dishes, Mother wanted me to give up the hunt. But I was thoroughly mad and felt that the struggle with the *Grenzschatz* had become my personal little war against the German Reich.

At the Polish police station I was promised that one of their men would accompany me to the *Grenzschatz* house to testify in my case. The next day he came for me. This time the German officer did not come out, but ordered us to come up to his office. Paralyzed with fear of passing the cage, I held on tight to the Polish policeman's sleeve while the dog's teeth snapped through the bars only a few inches away from my ankles. The German, in shirt sleeves and house slippers as usual, was sprawling behind a desk. Several other men were sitting around the room. While the Pole made his report, the *Grenzschatz* only glared at him venomously. As soon as he had finished, I stepped forward.

"May I have my dishes now?"

"No," snapped the officer, "you may not. The report is oral. It should have been in writing."

Indignation choked me. "In heaven's name, why didn't you tell me before? Or why didn't you tell me at once that you don't want to give me back my property?"

"Shut up," he bellowed, banging his fist on the table. "I forbid you to speak to me that way."

Hearing some of the men snicker, he added in a more official tone, "You've gone about this affair in a most irregular manner. You tried to obtain the objects in our possession by subterfuge, by approaching one of the men. How do I know that they are yours?"

Unable to find my voice I pulled out my compact and dabbed furiously at my nose. I snapped it shut. Then, out of sheer nervousness, I opened and snapped it to again. This gesture infuriated the German.

"Stop that infernal noise!" he shouted.

This was the last straw. Boiling with rage, I opened my compact and deliberately snapped it straight in his face several times.

He leaned back, gasping. The other Germans burst into loud laughter, and I recovered my voice.

"You horrible man! Do I look like a gypsy that goes stealing other people's dishes? Well, you may have my bowls. Put that down in your books, you who are such a stickler for formality. I'm making you a present of that which was stolen from me!"

He rose to his feet. "I've had enough of you," he snarled. "Get out before I shoot!"

"All right," I said, and retreated with dignity toward the door. But suddenly the thought smote me, how would I make my way by the cage of that bloodthirsty beast? The Polish policeman had vanished during the altercation. I went back to the desk and demanded, "Tell someone to take me out. I'm afraid of the dog." It was an anticlimax, but my terror was even greater than my pride.

The officer was still shaking his fist at me. "Go, before it is too late!"

"I won't go unless someone goes with me," I repeated stubbornly.

We glared at each other. At last he gave in.

"Donnerwetter! Hans, ich werde dieses freche Weib erschiessen wenn sie da länger bleibt. Nimm sie weg." ("Hans,

I'll shoot this impudent woman if she stays here any longer. Take her away.")

Hans led me out.

At home the family listened to my story mockingly. Father, seeing that I was close to tears, said, "We knew it would be a waste of time. Cool down, dear. It isn't worth the nerves. Think of the people who have lost everything they had."

And Mother added, with an ironical smile, "Strange how the loss of one teaspoon of our own can move us more than the loss of somebody else's estate."

The teasing went on for days, until at last my persistence was vindicated. A Polish policeman brought our crockery back with the warning that I had better never again show myself in the neighborhood of the *Grenzschatz* headquarters.

Towards the middle of August our former maid Marysia came back from Germany. She was pregnant. An official letter followed, stating that if she registered her child as German a state subsidy would be paid her. She did not avail herself of the offer.

Many arrests occurred among our closest neighbors. Among others Stefania, an eighteen-year-old girl, was taken. Several weeks later she was released together with a schoolteacher who had shared her cell. The teacher related how she and another woman were already in the cell when Stefania was thrust in. The girl spent the first day lying on the floor, weeping bitterly. The other women hovered around her distressed that they did not know how to comfort her. Just before bedtime the girl suddenly stopped crying and jumped up with a savage determination in her eyes. She pulled off her chemise and tore it into strips.

"She's going to hang herself," the teacher confided to her companion.

They watched for the right moment to pounce on the desperate girl. But Stefania, to the amazement of the older women, only combed out her black hair with her fingers,

separated it into strands, and used the strips of material to roll it into curls.

The Germans were advancing in the east and had driven the Russians out of Lwow. But railroad and postal communications with that city were still prohibited. Word reached us, however, that Uncle Napoleon had died in early June, during the Russian occupation.

Uncle Napoleon had been head of the Institute of Hygiene and professor of bacteriology at the University of Lwow. The Russians had kept him on at his post but had told him that he would soon be transferred with his laboratory to a distant part of the Soviet Union. He knew that Aunt Teresa would not be permitted to accompany him. The dread of deportation and of being separated from his wife and family had undermined his health, and he had died of heart failure.

September 1941

by GAITHER

THE summer had done us good. We felt rested and unafraid. In Warsaw, to which Hania and I had returned, we made preparations to be ready in case of a sudden arrest. We went carefully over papers and documents, burning and destroying anything that could incriminate us or our friends. We packed two suitcases, one for each of us, putting in the things that would be necessary in jail. For 700 zlotys—before the war such shoes would have cost fifteen zlotys—I bought a sturdy pair of shoes, with soles almost an inch thick and especially treated to resist the moisture of dank basements. In each bag we placed some sugar, tea, and vitamin pills, a bar of kitchen soap, mending cotton, three changes of underwear, stockings, a warm sweater, and some first-aid supplies, such as

mercurochrome and gauze. The prisoners were not provided with such things, and often they would have to tear strips off their own underwear or use paper to bandage wounds. We had told Pola what lay in store for us, asking her if she would not prefer to leave. But she answered staunchly, "I'll stay with you as long as you need me. And if I have to be arrested—well, it's too bad. I guess sooner or later all honest folks will be in jail."

I went on with my church work and gave a good deal of time to teaching in our Bible Training School. The program in the American Colony continued along established lines. All my free moments were devoted to listening to the radio and jotting down the broadcasts, which I later communicated to all whom I could trust.

To give a Jew shelter, a piece of bread, or a drink of water was a criminal offense, punishable by death, said the new law. For any Jew to leave the ghetto without official permission meant immediate execution. And yet, driven by hunger, small Jewish children went begging daily outside the ghetto for anything they could get.

One day I was passing the ruins of Graniczna Street, when ahead of me appeared a group of Jewish children, each carrying a small sack of garnered booty. I watched them sneak towards a gap in the incomplete ghetto wall. Before it stood a Polish policeman; behind it, on the inside, a Jewish one. Simultaneously, the two walked away, and in a flash most of the children had disappeared through the gap into the ghetto. The policemen returned. The few little ones who were still outside receded waiting for the next opportunity. A man who had stopped beside me said, "This goes on night and day. The policemen do what they can."

Suddenly, without warning, the children raced frantically away from us. Two helmeted soldiers came swooping around the corner on bicycles and tore after them. Though the fleeing kids were swift, the Germans pounced on one tiny lad. They tied his hands behind him and dragged him to a man-

hole. The child looked ridiculously small in the grip of those two brutes. Without a sound, without a struggle, he stood still, clutching his pathetic treasure of begged crusts. A shove, a plunge, and the manhole was closed again. For a while, the soldiers stood guard over it—long enough for the water to carry the boy away—then mounted their bicycles and continued on their rounds.

At home Hania asked me, "Are you ill?" But I could not tell her of what I had seen.

Karol Karst, despite his German name, was an ardent Pole and an active member of the underground. He was a lawyer by profession, had volunteered, and had been taken prisoner of war by the Germans. He had been released because his condition seemed hopeless. By and by he had recovered, and now he was officially in the business of selling and buying such permissible articles as glass and china. Surreptitiously he sold shoe leather and food.

"By the way," he asked me one day, "do you ever drink 'Mata tea'? It's good, almost like the real thing. You ought to try it."

"Never heard of it. Where can I get it?"

"I don't know exactly myself, but if you walk down Bagatela Street you'll find a poster on the third lamppost to the left from the corner. The name of the firm that's advertising it may be on the poster."

A twinkle in his eye made me curious. The next time I turned into Bagatela, I saw it—a bill about a foot and a half long, with a caption legible at a distance that said, DRINK MATA TEA.

I read the fat print at the top, skipped over the block of fine type that followed, and read the line, MOM AND DAD DRINK ONLY MATA. Farther down I read, KIDDIES ALSO DRINK DELICIOUS MATA.

What could Karol have meant? I reverted to the fine type. In plain Polish, for everybody to see, right in front of the nose of the Gestapo, were the following instructions:

Poles, resist the enemy at every step!

Do not assist the Germans in any way. When they ask for information, pretend not to understand. Misinform them whenever possible.

Do not look at them, take no notice of them when in their presence. Do not shake hands with them. Make the invader feel that he is moving in a void.

Do not trade in German-owned stores and do not buy articles, even though they are indispensable, manufactured in the Reich.

Do not buy liquor or cigarettes. Do not go to the movies, since the proceeds go for enemy purposes.

Work slowly, waste time when on German-assigned duty.

Whenever possible, circumvent German laws and regulations, sabotage the German war effort—

The list was long. Karol was right—it was the real stuff.

Fall 1941

by HANIA

THE summer months had wrought a great change in the appearance of the inhabitants of Warsaw. The people were haggard. On the squares and in the borders along pavements, where so recently we had seen the graves of victims of the blitz, people had planted vegetables. Carrots and radishes growing out of soil fertilized by human flesh were a ghoulish paraph to our life.

We increased our amount of soup cooked daily and invited, as permanent guests, Cessak, the furnace man, and Mrs. Polkowska and Miss Esten, two lonely old souls. Cessak was so weak from hunger that he staggered. We had found out about Miss Esten when she fainted one day in church.

Immediately after coming back to Warsaw, I went to see Rose. "What about Orlik?"

She looked strained and nervous. "I don't know why his

release is dragging so. But please don't come here again. It's dangerous. I'm being watched. I shall get in touch with you when necessary, so please be patient."

Two weeks went by and Orlik's brother came. According to news received from camp, Orlik's health was rapidly failing. But no word came from Rose.

Despite her warning, I went again to her apartment. I knocked on her door without results. After some time the door across the landing opened and a woman asked in a whisper, "Did you come to see Miss Rose? She has been arrested. If I were you, I wouldn't stand here in front of her door. They're watching. Several people who came here have been taken by the Gestapo."

Gaither and I decided that we could not give up, and I looked for the Old Lady, Rose's boss. After cautious reconnoitering, I obtained her address and went to her. She looked around seventy. Her thin face bore the marks of great beauty, and her eyes, under their heavy black eyebrows, were bright and piercing. She was not pleased to see me.

"Really, you shouldn't have come," she said. "You're endangering yourself and me also, and your impatience will not accelerate things. We are doing all we can, but the whole enterprise is difficult and complicated."

She promised to keep in touch with me, and we arranged an elaborate system of signals to be used when Orlik was set free. He would come to our home, straight from the concentration camp, and I would bring the ransom to an indicated place. After paying I would get a set of forged identification papers, and he would be sent to the country to recuperate.

Rose had told me that the Old Lady was motivated by an ardent patriotism. This first contact with her left me with a vague uneasiness.

When word came that Danuta Ciazynska had rejoined her parents, I immediately went to see the Latineks. They were still living in the same room back of the Parliament Gardens, and in it they had put up an extra cot for their daughter.

Danuta, a gifted physician, had been left on the staff of the Torun City Hospital longer than her colleagues, but at last even she had been deported.

"What did you do with your furniture?" I asked her, remembering her beautiful home.

"I had to turn it in," she said, "but believe me no German will have the satisfaction of using it."

It was custom-built and especially designed for the type of life an army officer's family has to lead. Pieces were put together by means of hinges and screws and could be taken apart and packed into crates, requiring a minimum of space.

"I had to pack it for them, can you beat it?" said Danuta. "Well, I did pack it, but they will never be able to put it together again. I threw away all the screws and bolts. They can't be replaced."

We had a good laugh over her bicycle, which, with her other possessions, had been listed for confiscation. She had hunted the junk piles for months, then, bit by bit, part by part, had exchanged steering bars, wheels, pedals, and finally the frame. When she had finished she turned over a complete bicycle to the Germans but it was the worst junk anyone had ever seen. Her own, taken apart, was safely hidden with friends who were officially registered as *Volksdeutsche*.

It is a custom in Poland to paste death notices on the walls of churches. These black-bordered posters increased in number during the fall of 1941. On most, the date of demise was not given. These were victims murdered in prisons and concentration camps.

The Germans were again turning their attention to the clergy, and many of our friends were among the pastors arrested. The news came that Pastor George Kahané, who had been taken prisoner in July, had succumbed after tortures in the camp of Oranienburg, and we learned about the death of others who had been imprisoned earlier in the year.

German communiqués daily announced the capture of thousands of Russian soldiers. Some of the camps were near Warsaw.

One day, while we were at the country home of Mr. Zak, we saw a German soldier come into the yard with four men. He prodded them on. They staggered, supporting one another. Their clothes had been uniforms at one time, but now they were rags. Their hair and beards were matted, their sunken eyes glazed. They were Russians from the near-by camp.

Mr. Zak went out, and the German told him he had come for wood that could be made into crosses. At that moment the cook brought out a pan of hot mush and set it down on the ground for the dogs. The four specters began to quiver and whimper. Imploringly they turned to the German and then to Zak. A moment later they were on the ground, grabbing the steaming mush with their hands, cramming it into their mouths. In no time they had scraped the pan clean. Zak led them off to the woodshed. When they had departed, he came into the house shaken and pale. He knew Russian and had spoken to the prisoners.

"Oh, God! Those were Soviet prisoners. Did you see them? They said it was the first hot food since they'd been captured—in six weeks. They're kept in an open field without any shelter. They sleep in the mud. Thousands of them, and dying like flies. My God! What suffering."

A few weeks later we were passing through a suburb when we saw a column of Soviet prisoners shuffling up the street. Surrounded by police dogs and armed guards, they plodded forward, some of them half carrying their exhausted comrades. The few pedestrians gazed somberly at the convoy. Suddenly a woman detached herself from the rest, snatched a small piece of black bread from under her shawl, and thrust it at one of the Russians, unmindful of the guards' cries. A shot rang out. The woman jerked up violently and slumped to the ground. The bread rolled into the gutter. The column moved on.

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these . . . a cup of cold water . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward."

From time to time Soviet planes bombed Warsaw. They usually made night raids, but when the wailing of the sirens

woke us up, we merely rolled over in our beds. Gaither would mumble, "Are you going down to the cellar? I'm not. If I have to die, I would rather do it comfortably."

According to German regulations, buckets of sand were placed on all the landings, and the men living in our building had to serve in turn as air-raid wardens. The duty consisted in standing guard in the courtyard and striking a gong in case of an air raid. The German sirens were so few and so weak that this additional signal was necessary.

The first time Gaither was on duty he had the unpleasant experience, towards three in the morning, of seeing Gestapo agents arrest one of the old tenants. His apartment was thoroughly looted by the police. Several months later Gaither rented it to another family.

Since the very beginning of the war there had been sporadic cases of typhus. Now it spread like wildfire. In the ghetto it took hundreds of lives daily. In the Christian quarter, street after street broke out with a rash of red tickets that marked quarantined houses. Many cases went undetected, for people concealed them from the authorities. Whenever a case was reported, guards were immediately posted, and no one could leave or enter for days. Those who had no food on hand faced starvation. Every time we came back from town, we carefully examined our clothes for lice.

One evening, Klara Rosen, who had disappeared when her father had moved into the ghetto, came and threw herself in my arms.

"Father——" she sobbed. "Friends who know where I live telephoned me. He died yesterday." It was another typhus case.

Later she asked me, "What should I do? Tomorrow is the funeral. I want to see him once more, but I have the feeling that once I go in, I'll never come out alive." Her eyes were enormous, full of inexpressible terror. I thought of Goscicki, Czerwinski, and others now dead. "No, Klara," I said firmly, "your father wouldn't want you to go. He'd want you to stay alive." She began to cry again, but there was relief in her tears.

She told me that she had spent the past year working as a maid in a lumberjacks' camp in the mountains. This girl, brought up in ease, who had never done any manual work, had learned to knead bread, chop wood, and haul buckets of water for thirty-eight men. Now she was back in Warsaw, as a waitress in a restaurant.

"I wonder if you couldn't help me," she asked. "My boss is a *Volksdeutscher*, and he's beginning to suspect me. Yesterday he questioned me for a long time about my family and friends. This morning he struck me in the face when I dropped a cup."

I told Klara I would do my best. The very next day I went to Ola's. She not only promised temporary help but said she had a job for Klara.

Gaither and I were coming home one day on the streetcar, wedged in among the passengers of the Polish section. The conductor came to collect the fares and, hearing that we were not speaking Polish, pointed to the front of the car. "The German section is almost empty. You'll be more comfortable there." Under the overtones of politeness, his hatred was patent.

Turning to him indignantly I said, "I'll thank you not to insult us. This is where we belong. We are not Germans."

He moved away with an apology, but I could see his eyes come back to us from time to time with interest. When the crowd had gradually melted away, he sidled up to us and, touching his cap, said, "Would you mind telling me what language you were speaking?"

"English," said Gaither.

The conductor's face slid through a scale of mixed emotions. Surprise, suspicion, confusion, then finally a broad grin of delight. "I'm very sorry that I took you for Germans." He went back to his duties, but his enamored gaze followed us, and as we passed him going out, he grasped Gaither's hand and shook it vigorously.

"God bless you," he said fervently. "England will win."

We had been invited to the Gutowskis to tea. I had preceded Gaither and was wondering uneasily why he was late. Mrs.

Gutowska, passing my cup, was saying, "Your hands are shaking. Lack of sugar, my dear. I suppose you feel a tremor in your legs too when you walk up stairs?" She was a doctor of medicine and proceeded to expound the effects of prolonged malnutrition. "If this continues, our memory will deteriorate, our gums will get sore, our hair will come out."

Just then Gaither entered looking upset.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"A German in a Hitler Jugend uniform hopped on the step of our section of the streetcar. At the next stop a group of people tried to get on. The Hitler Jugend tyrant let in three of them, then barred the passage. One of those who wanted to get on asked in German 'May I pass?' 'No,' roared the German. When the Pole didn't step back, the boy hit him in the face with his fist and sent him sprawling, and then glared at us to see how we were taking it."

Mr. Gutowski said, "You should have heard what one of my former business partners told me this morning. He is a *Volksdeutscher* and just back from Pinsk."

Pinsk, which at first had been under Russian occupation, had been newly captured by the Germans. The Gutowskis had lived there before the war.

"There were many Jews in our town," Mr. Gutowski continued. "When the Russians withdrew, they took away all the able-bodied adults, and thousands of children were left. When the Germans entered, they collected eleven thousand Jewish waifs. They took them outside the city and mowed them down with machine guns."

"How did this crime affect your former 'associate?'" asked Gaither.

"In no way that I could detect. He was, however, slightly put out when he told me about the death of our mutual partner. In our firm there were three partners—the German Miller, a Jew named Jacob Schein, and I. Under Soviet occupation, Jacob, who was a lawyer, had to hide, since the Soviet authorities deported Polish lawyers and judges to penal colonies. For nearly two years he lived in forests and caves,

and when the Germans came, he greeted them as liberators. Under the German regime, Miller was made chief of police. One day Jacob came to his office, but after a few minutes, he said, 'I'm sorry, but I've got to hurry. All Jews have been ordered to report for work this afternoon with spades and shovels.'

"Jacob," said Miller, "don't go. Stay today with me. Sit here while I finish my work, and then we'll go home and have supper together."

"Not on your life," exclaimed Jacob, "if they need me and my spade, you can bet I'll be there. I'd do anything to help beat those Bolsheviks."

"Miller told me, 'I knew what the spades were for. They were to be used in digging Jewish graves. Too bad Jacob didn't listen to me. After helping with the digging, he was shot with the others that afternoon.'"

The end of November brought extremely cold weather. Mother and Father were writing anxiously to know whether we would join them for Christmas. We were missing Mimi very much, and it would be a comfort to have at least a few days together, so we made plans to leave Warsaw around the middle of December. Gaither bought our railroad tickets. I did some Christmas shopping—a rag doll for Mimi, two ounces of real tea for Mother, Alexis Carrel's *Man, The Unknown* for Father, and a necklace for Christine.

After one of our Friday night concerts, Ruth and I were waiting for Gaither in the rapidly emptying hall.

"What would you like for Christmas?" I asked her.

"I guess a pound of real coffee. And you?"

"A bar of real soap. The kind we get on our ration cards smells awful. I hate to touch it. They say the Germans get fat out of human corpses to make it with. There must be something to it."

We were interrupted by Gaither, who came up and introduced a tall and very thin boy—an American named Paul Quail. He looked so famished that I invited him over to dinner the

following day. An additional guest never bothered me. There was still enough water in the spigot with which to stretch the soup.

"Are you sure he is all right?" I asked Gaither while Paul was speaking to Ruth. "What if he is a spy?"

"We'll have to be careful."

But the next day, watching our guest eat in silence and with concentration, I knew that he was no German agent. From that day on, we almost adopted him.

Gradually we learned Paul's story. His father had taught mathematics in an American university. In 1939 he had brought his wife and two children to Poland to visit his ailing mother. The old lady died just before the outbreak of hostilities. During the first year of the war Paul's parents tried to return to America, but the German authorities raised innumerable obstacles. However, in the spring of 1941 they were finally able to visit our consulate in Berlin and obtain their new green passports. All arrangements were completed for their trip home, including steamship reservations. They returned to Laki where they had been living, to pack. On May 3, several days before the scheduled departure, Paul was arrested. Knowing he had done nothing wrong, he expected to be released, but he was taken to a cell. This cell, designed to accommodate twelve, contained fifty-two men. I asked him how they could sleep.

"Two or three to a bunk. Whenever a few washed or dressed, the rest of us had to stay on the bunks. During the summer, the cell was stifling, the heat unbearable. They didn't release me for six months."

"And what about your parents?"

"They arrested Father ten days after me, but he was kept in a separate cell."

Their food was rotten beets and turnips. It was a red letter day when potatoes were served. He got dysentery, but he remained on the same diet and in the same cell. His two bedfellows caught the disease from him.

"The worst of it was that a number of inmates were de-

generates and hardened criminals. The Gestapo cynically forced this association on us."

He was beaten and tortured. He had pulled through however, and as time went by his cracked leg mended, and the cuts on his body became scars. Only the broken eardrum would not heal. In November they let him out and deported him to Warsaw. His father remained in prison, his mother and sister in Laki.

On a cold December afternoon, Ruth and I, huddled in our fur coats, talked in whispers, comparing chilblains, while Gaither sat at the radio jotting down the British broadcast. Suddenly he called out impatiently, "Hush!" He turned up the radio, which we usually kept down to a mere whisper, and Ruth and I drew nearer. When the speaker had finished, Gaither snapped it off.

Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor.

"Now it is a question of hours," I said, "until we are arrested. Germany is bound to follow suit, after what has happened. We must get ready at once."

Ruth, usually so easy-going, grew very angry. "Nothing will happen," she snapped. "Why should Germany declare war on America? She is only too anxious to have the United States stay out of it."

Gaither was of the same opinion. "Keep your shirt on, sweetheart," he said. "Although I am sure we will land in jail one of these days, I don't think it will happen until after Christmas."

"Gates," I cried, exasperated, "you make me sick. If you think that your Christmas holiday means anything to Hitler, you're crazy."

However, when several days went by and nothing happened, I forgot my fears.

The winter had hardly started, and this was my sixth cold of the season. Pola, when she came in one morning with my breakfast said severely, "You're not getting up today."

"Oh, Pola," I wailed. "I have a million things to do. Let me get up!"

"Over my dead body! And if you try to pull any tricks, I'll write to Bory."

It was not yet eight o'clock, but Gaither was already dressed and ready to go out.

"Must you go?" I asked. "It is still dark, and the weather is awful."

But he said he had an appointment at the bank and called back from the door that he would be home by ten. Around nine Aunt Genia dropped in.

"It's warm in here," she said, taking off her gloves. "You must have fuel. Is the heat on?"

"It was turned on a week ago for a whole day. That's why it's warm."

"Well, I thought there was a difference in temperature. My house is colder than a barn, and last night I was so cold I cried like a baby."

Pola burst into the room. "There are two men asking for Pan Pastor," she whispered. "They speak only German. What shall I tell them?"

"Ask them to wait. I'll be right out."

She left, and I jumped out of bed, slipping my feet into my bedroom slippers. I was reaching for my housecoat when the door was thrown open and two men—cigars between their teeth and hats on their heads—walked in. One glance at them told me who they were.

"What do you wish?" I asked with pretended calmness as I slipped on my kimono.

One of the men had gone to the side door and was peering into the next room. The other one answered, "Where is your husband?"

"He's out."

"Hmm, an early bird. Where has he gone?"

"I don't know, he didn't say."

The other one came back from his inspection, and asked, "When do you expect him back?"

I thought rapidly: If they have come to arrest Gaither, it

will be better to give him time. So I answered, "Around noon; maybe later."

The first man said, more amiably, "We are from the City Hall. We understand that your husband is administrator of this building, and we would like to see him about the water tax. We'll be back around twelve. Tell him to wait for us here."

No sooner had the door closed after them than I said to Aunt Genia, "Gaither's grip is packed, but we'll have to get him some fresh bread and maybe a piece of smoked meat."

My aunt said dubiously, "Are you sure it was the—"

"They must have been," said Pola, who had come back. "They looked into the buffet drawers on their way out."

Pola went out to hunt for Gaither's food. Shortly after ten, Gaither came back, and I told him what had happened. He laughed.

"You have a wild imagination."

Grumbling, he put on his prison shoes and suit which I had laid out. But when he saw the tray Pola was bringing in, he didn't argue any more. There were scrambled eggs and a small piece of meat, a cup of real tea, and a stale doughnut. Pola had done wonders and was justly proud of this unusual treat. Trying to hide her emotion, she spoke gruffly: "Pan Pastor had better stop staring and begin to eat. The police will be here any minute, and you don't want to go on an empty stomach. The first twenty-four hours the prisoners get no food."

Gaither went over his correspondence and papers. We burned a few letters, and I jotted down instructions about the church, which I was to give Brother Najder.

"Twelve o'clock," said Gaither. "Well, and where are your policemen? I've wasted enough time. If anyone comes for me, you know where to find me. I have a class downstairs."

An hour later there was a ring at the front door. Pola went to open it and I followed her. A Gestapo sergeant walked in.

"*Ist Herr Warfield da?*" he asked loudly.

I stepped forward. "My husband has gone to a class," I said.

"Why? Didn't our men tell you that he was not to leave the house?"

"How was I to know they were the Gestapo? They said they had come about the water tax."

He laughed. "Is that what they said? All right, but where is he?"

"On the second floor."

"Take me to him."

"Do you have to arrest him?"

"Not arrest, madam! Intern!" he exclaimed virtuously. "But how did you know?"

"We have been expecting it, almost everybody does nowadays."

We walked into the administration office. Gaither was standing with his back to us, talking to Michael. Augustus, the clerk, was the first to see us, and he ran to Gaither. "The Gestapo! They are here for you."

Gaither came up, looking just as usual. "Hania, ask him if I might sign a few checks."

The request was granted. Gaither wrote, got up, went from man to man to shake hands in goodbye. Then we returned to our apartment, with the Gestapo sergeant watching every move.

Gaither's bag stood ready. Pola had thoughtfully strapped to it a blanket and my short sheepskin coat. She had put a loaf of bread and two pounds of smoked meat into the bag and also a piece of laundry soap that she had managed to buy. I asked the Gestapo officer if I could give Gaither a book or two, and he answered that there were no orders to the contrary.

"I'll take my German language book with me," said Gaither.

While he stepped into his study, I turned to the Gestapo man. "Take me to jail with him, please."

"The order was to bring only your husband."

"I want to be arrested too. My bag is ready. I want to go to prison with him."

"Sorry, not this time. Maybe I'll be back for you soon," he added comfortingly.

When Gaither had got all his things together, the officer said he had a car waiting down in the street. We kissed. It was unemotional, brief. With a last smile at me, and a hand-shake with Pola, whose face was screwed up into a ball, Gaither started toward the door. Suddenly I remembered I hadn't packed his Testament.

"Wait!" I called. "I've forgotten something."

"Ach, these women!" exclaimed the German. "Be quick."

I made a dash for the Testament, picked up a deck of cards also, and put them into Gaither's pocket. In no time Gaither was in the car. He waved and grinned, and the next moment was gone.

December 1941

by GAITHER

IN THE Gestapo sedan, I relaxed against the cushions of the back seat. At last I was arrested, and the long suspense of waiting was over.

We drove into the yard of the headquarters on Szucha Avenue, and I was led into the basement of the building, then through a stoutly barred door, and down a long corridor. One side of the passage had a row of small grated windows; the other, a row of grated doors that opened on small rooms furnished with four schoolroom desks each. People were sitting at the desks, their heads on their arms. Near the end of the passage was a room with two narrow cots, the guards' rest room. Here a heavily padded door ended the corridor. Next to it was a grated door, and through this I entered a long, narrow room. It looked like a section of a corridor converted into a cell. It was furnished with four iron cots, one

of them covered with a thin, dirty mattress, and two wooden chairs.

I sat for a while thumbing the two German novels I found in the cell, and then a guard came for me. We walked up several flights of stairs and crossed to the northern wing of the building. I was ushered into an expensively furnished office, which I had never seen before. I waited at the door while the keen-looking officer behind the desk—the Kommissar—finished a conversation with officials. When they had left he turned to me.

"Please come over here, Herr Superintendent." His English was excellent, with only a trace of an accent. He got up and motioned towards a leather chair by his desk. "Have a seat." Out of a drawer of his mahogany desk, he produced a box of cigars and held it out to me.

"I don't smoke, thank you."

"Mr. Warfield, I regret having to arrest you. Orders from Berlin, you understand. It is nothing personal. I have followed your activities—your church work and your work in the American Colony.

"We need your assistance. You know the people registered in your colony. It just happens that we have to make a number of arrests among Americans, and we have to know their whereabouts." He smiled at me expectantly.

"There is nothing I can do for you. You have the list of the members of our colony and their addresses."

He looked slightly annoyed. "We know, and I am sure you do too, that many of the addresses are fictitious. There is no doubt you could help." As an afterthought, he added, "Of course, I shall do all in my power to make your stay with us comfortable."

Was it a promise to make things easy for me in return for collaboration?

The Kommissar stood up and, bowing slightly, indicated that the interview was at an end. He rang, and the guard appeared immediately.

On the way down to my cell, I told my black-shirted guard,

that I was hungry. He said it was against regulations to feed prisoners for the first twenty-four hours at least, but after a while he came back with a bowl of soup and a piece of rye bread.

The door had been left open, and I wandered into the guards' room. There was no one there. Sauntering back into the corridor, I was startled to see that the padded door was being opened and to hear a German voice shouting. A man was thrust through the door—a small fellow. His clothes were torn. The collar of his shirt was partly off, his hair dishevelled. Two purple welts ran across his face. He stared at me with wide-open expressionless eyes. The guttural voice bellowed again, and this time I understood. I led the dazed man to the lavatory. Without a word, he let me pilot him. I waited behind the closed door, while he was retching inside. Then I took him back to the padded entrance. The glare of the light beyond was so strong that I blinked. Two pairs of powerful hands snatched the little Pole away from me, and the door closed with a dull thud. My guard reappeared and locked me up in my cell.

I watched through the bars of the door as the guards' room across the corridor began to fill. One of the men came to my cell and asked in Polish if I understood German. He added, "The Fuehrer is going to make an important speech. You listen. We'll turn on the radio. You will hear something that will interest you."

Brassy, martial music came over the loud speaker, followed by a fanfare of bugles and a short introduction. Then the raucous, passionate voice of Hitler filled the air. I understood little of what he was saying, but the guards frequently strolled over to stress a point with their own remarks.

"He is giving that old idiot, Churchill, the devil now."

"Now he's telling that cripple of yours where to get off." I could understand them better than the voice over the radio.

The words came over the air more clearly as Hitler declared war on the United States, and I did not need the help of the Gestapo men to understand.

"So I'm in for good," I told myself. "Behind the bars until peace is declared."

Around five I was told to put on my overcoat and take my suitcase. In the corridor I joined a group of Poles—five men and two women. They were probably young, but as they stood there, heads and bodies bruised, deep lines in their livid faces, their bloodless lips grimly compressed, there was no youth left in them. Two guards came out and, at a command, we faced left and shuffled forward—up the steps to the first floor, and through a long corridor running the entire length of the building to the back. In the courtyard we climbed into a large van with a black canvas top. Some of the prisoners ahead of me did not have the strength to hoist themselves. The others helped them, and the guards punched and struck. I was one of the last to take my place on the hard boards placed athwart the truck for seats. I sat beside the two women. The chain was pulled tightly across our waist and securely fastened on both sides. Two muscular guards climbed in and sat astraddle on the last board.

We rode along jostling one another on the uncomfortable seats. I felt that I had to know our destination and addressing one of the guards in my best German, I asked, "Where are we going?"

He gave no sign of having heard.

"Have we a long ride ahead of us?"

He didn't even turn his eyes in my direction.

The streets were now dimly lighted. Trucks and German cars were rolling by. Shabby pedestrians were hurrying along the sidewalks. Only this morning I had been one of them, but now all that seemed to belong to a life long forgotten. After six hours of confinement, I could hardly remember what it meant to move and act freely. The time spent as a prisoner in Russia had suddenly emerged out of the past and had fused with the present moment. I had the choking feeling that I had always been a will-less thing, being shifted about, and that this would go on forever.

The van stopped at one of the entrances to the ghetto. Some-

how I had not thought of my prison as being inside the enclosure. The sentries waved us on, and our car plowed through throngs of Jews jamming the ghetto streets. This must have been a usual sight to them, for they hardly looked at us.

We stopped in front of a high wall. The chauffeur sounded his horn, the great gates slowly opened, and no sooner had we passed than they closed again. I had joined the world of living corpses. I had become one more inmate among the three or four thousand political prisoners held in Pawiak.

Our group was checked, and the men and women who had come with me were marched off. I was taken alone to a small room for registration. The clerk who entered my data in a large ledger was a Pole, a prisoner who had been assigned this job because he spoke several languages fluently. He looked at me with sympathy and thought it would do no harm if I sat down in the corner to wait for the warden, who was to take me to my quarters. Four guards came in. They were hulking brutes, with large fists and thick red necks. One of them stamped across the room and, towering over me, shouted something in German. I looked at him questioningly. He bellowed again, then slowly rolled back the cuffs of his uniform. The veins on his forehead swelled and moved under the skin. But before he could strike me the desk clerk cried out, "Don't touch him. He is an American, and the Kommissar has given special orders."

My wait ended when a prison turnkey came for me. We walked through one yard, then another, passed a three-story building—the women's prison, as I learned later—another wall, a gate. We came to a small yard shut off on two sides by tall structures, and on the third by a very high blank wall. On the left was a two-story building with windows that had no grating and were much larger than in the other buildings. We went up to the second story, where rooms were being scrubbed by prisoners. Before the German occupation of Poland, I was told, this building had housed prison officials. It had several apartments, and I was taken to one which con-

sisted of three large rooms, a small room, and a kitchen. There I was left and locked up.

There were a number of iron cots in the rooms, with straw mattresses. I was alone. I looked for the best bed. The apartment, probably unheated since the outbreak of war, was very cold. There were no blankets, and I was glad for the one Pola had strapped to my bag. I stretched out, fully clothed except that I took off my shoes. I placed my suitcase under my head and promptly fell asleep.

It was still dark when I was awakened by a Polish guard, who shook me by the shoulder, saying I was wanted at the office. I pulled on my shoes and followed him to the central building, where I was lined up with nine other prisoners. We were packed into a prison van, which took us back to the Gestapo headquarters.

This time the little cells in the basement were full of movement and sound. It was easy to tell at a glance that these noisy, whistling, fairly well-dressed civilians were not Poles weakened by months of slow starvation and torture. I recognized many members of our American Colony. They greeted me lustily, but before I had time to exchange a word with them, I was whisked off to the Kommissar's office. Yesterday's quiet, elegant sanctuary was today jammed with people. At one end stood a large group of civilians. At the other end, the Kommissar, standing very straight, was snapping out orders, in a sharp, cutting voice, to a group of police agents. The door was constantly opening as new prisoners were brought in. Guards were rushing back and forth with documents and reports. No sooner had I entered than the Kommissar called me to his desk and began to rage.

"What kind of colony did you run? What kind of lists did you present? The addresses on your reports are no good. We can't find half of the Americans."

I rejoiced inwardly that some of our members had been able to evade capture. He went on storming. I finally said quietly, "What could I do? We took down the addresses that were given, but we had neither the means nor the time to

check them. You can't blame me if these people moved away to the country after I had turned in my reports."

This did not appease him.

"Here," he cried, thrusting a stack of filing cards at me. "Look at them."

Indeed I did, curious to see which ones of our citizens had fled. Some of them, I remembered, had always told me they would hide in case America came into the war.

Later the Kommissar made me check the papers of the men who had been arrested to see if all of them were bona fide American citizens. Among the first were Simon Orner and his son, a boy about seventeen years of age. Mr. Orner had worked in the office of the United States Lines, and I knew him by sight. I was glad when I had an opportunity to ask him, without being overheard, "Tell me, do you want to be arrested?"

"Yes indeed!" he exclaimed. "I have been living with my wife and son in the ghetto for the last year. We have little money, and we are slowly starving to death. My wife can get along better selling the few things that are left with only herself to look after if the two of us are taken care of in prison."

"Let me see your passport," I said.

It was an old red one, which had expired at least ten years ago. Neither Orner nor his son were born in America, and I knew that they had ceased to be American citizens, but would the Germans know this? I was still cogitating when an officer approached and asked, "Are the Orners American?"

"Certainly," I replied without hesitation. "Here is their passport."

Orner was taken away to where the other internees were waiting. His son, being a minor, was released.

I spent the rest of the morning in the Kommissar's office, trying to help both those who wanted to be arrested and those who wanted to be released. When the work was done I was taken back to the basement, where I joined other American

citizens. Some of them I had known for many years; others I had met when the American Colony was organized.

The trip back to Pawiak in their company, in the now familiar black van, was vastly different from my other two trips. The men, though we were packed so tightly we could hardly breathe, whistled, talked, and bandied jokes. It was like a bunch of college boys going off to a football game.

I did the honors of the apartment in which I had slept alone the night before. There was much shouting and bustling while each man chose his cot and spread out whatever belongings he had been able to take along.

December 1941

by HANIA

AFTER the police car bearing Gaither disappeared around the corner, I continued to stand on the street. I was conscious of buffets of wind and wet snow, but my mind was a blank. Somebody spoke to me. It was Cessak, the furnace man, and he led me back to our apartment. Pola was sobbing, but she threw her plump arms around me.

"Don't you cry, baby," she said. "He'll be all right. He didn't go on an empty stomach. He had all those good eggs and such a nice piece of meat."

In the early afternoon the procession started. First came Michael and Lydia, then Bruno. They were followed by people living in our building and all over the city. Some of them were strangers to me. I was touched by their sympathy and willingness to help. Shortly before curfew, one more arrived—the Old Lady. She grasped my hands dramatically, looked at me with her blazing black eyes, and said huskily, "Poor child. I've come to help you. I have already taken steps, and tomorrow

I shall see what else can be done to obtain his release." She glanced around suspiciously. "I hope no one is listening."

I did not feel glad to see her. I did not want her help. "Thank you. You are very kind. But please don't do anything for my husband until I think it over."

"Every minute counts. Delay may ruin everything."

Before I realized what I was doing, I had said, "Perhaps it is better to let things take their own course. Maybe we shouldn't try to get his release."

She drew herself up with cold dignity. "If that's the way you feel, I'm sorry to have come."

Tears choked me. Why had I said such a stupid thing?

"I know how you feel. You need a rest after this shock. If you want help, call on me."

Superintendent Najder arrived in the morning from Cracow, and I gave him the instructions Gaither had left. We went together to Szucha Avenue. The admission slips were given out by a man who had a face like cold cement and eyes like steel rivets. "What do you want to see the Kommissar about?" he asked.

I explained timidly.

"What? Arrested yesterday and you're already here to bother the Kommissar? You can't see him."

My pleas did not move him, but when I said I was managing the American Colony he let us pass.

The Kommissar in charge of aliens was on the fourth floor. We waited a long time in front of his door before we were admitted into his spacious, well-furnished office. Germans in uniform were sprawling around smoking, and behind the mahogany desk sat a tall, thin man. His features were regular and intelligent, but in the high-domed forehead there was something sinister that gave the face the look of a death's-head. It was Kommissar Märtz. I gave him my admission slip.

"Ah, Mrs. Warfield. What is it you want?"

"I have come to ask your permission to send my husband bed sheets and food. I should also like to know when he'll be permitted to come home."

"Home? He's hardly been taken."

He laughed, then indicated that he considered the interview closed. "Your husband," he said, "doesn't need anything. The prison is properly equipped, and he'll get everything he needs."

I tried to insist, but he banged his fist on the desk. "Get out!" As I was still hesitating, he yelled, "Will you get out, or will I have to have you thrown out?"

When I got home there were friends and strangers who had come to express their sympathy.

"He was like a father."

"He always had a comforting word."

"I don't know what I'll do without his help."

One of the visitors was Mr. Rylski. I had seen him several times in Gaither's office. He was a dull-looking individual, interested solely in his clandestine soap factory.

"I've come to ask if I can be of assistance," he said. "Do you have enough money?"

"That's awfully kind of you, but I have enough for my needs."

"Fine, but have you thought of getting Mr. Warfield out of jail? That would require a larger sum."

I had to blink rapidly to keep the tears back when I thanked him. "Even you wouldn't be able to advance enough for such a bribe," I said. "But I appreciate your generous offer."

"I'm afraid I didn't make myself clear. Personally, I would not have the necessary funds, but I'm speaking in behalf of others, who have the means to help."

He made me memorize a name and telephone number, then left. Who would have thought that he was one of the underground!

The next caller was a woman. One glance at her new fur coat and modish hat put me on my guard. It surprised me, however, that there was apprehension in her pudgy, mauve-colored, thickly powdered face. In a tremulous voice she said, "I am Mrs. Albrecht. My husband and I at one time attended services at which Pastor Warfield spoke. We'd like to help."

She whispered rapidly in Polish, throwing in German words

occasionally. "The prisons are cold. No heat, no blankets, no sheets. He'll need those. He will need all the food you can send him—*Brot und Schmaltz*, and onions if possible."

I bristled with suspicions.

"Bedding and clothes won't be accepted at the prison without a certificate from the municipal disinfecting plant. Go and see Kommissar Märzt, but don't ask him for anything when others are about. Try to see him when he's alone. Parcels for prisoners can be handed in twice a week at the Seventh Police Station on Krochmalna Street."

"Thank you," I said, "but how do you know these details?"

"My husband works for the Gestapo."

My heart thumped with fright, but I said evenly enough, "Thank you for coming. I appreciate it, but I'm very tired, and if you'll excuse me—" We both rose.

She must have sensed my coldness, for she became flustered and explained, "We enjoyed Pastor Warfield's sermons so much. You see, we also are *Gotteskinder*."

The expression in German means 'faithful Christians'—literally, children of God.

"Some *Gotteskinder*," I muttered to myself as I closed the door after her. "The Lord's own babes on Himmler's payroll." If the woman wanted to get me in trouble of some kind, I couldn't see what she was planning to do.

Ruth and I decided to carry on the work of the colony. She was to continue with her usual tasks, and I—because my knowledge of German was an advantage—would take Gaither's place.

The morning after Gaither's arrest twenty-four American citizens were taken in Warsaw, and frantic mothers, wives, and daughters rushed to us for comfort and help. Though shaken by my own sorrow, I had to put on a serene front and serve as a repository for the sorrows of other women.

On the third day, at seven in the morning—it was still pitch-dark—the telephone rang sharply. I tumbled out of bed, picked up the receiver. Sleepily I mumbled, "Hello." The next moment I was wide awake.

"Gestapo headquarters." A harsh voice came over the wire. "Ohler speaking. Report as soon as possible on the fourth floor." He gave the room number.

I wakened Pola. "I've been summoned to the Gestapo. If I don't return by tonight, see that my suitcase is sent to me. Read the slip we gave you a few days ago and carry out the instructions." I gave her all our keys and whatever money I had in the house. On the way out, I stopped at Ruth's apartment. "If they arrest you," she said, "they'll take me too."

"I think you'd better be ready."

It was still dark when I knocked on Ohler's door. He was an officer of low rank, and therefore greeted me with a great deal of dignity. Regally he indicated a chair, then picked up a sheet of paper and said, "We understand that you are carrying on your husband's work at the colony. Tell all your members that every American citizen not yet interned will have to report once a week at the police station on Danilowiczowska Street. And don't forget to hand us a complete list of your members with accurate and up-to-date addresses. You will take a similar list to the police."

He was about to dismiss me when I said, "The day after my husband's arrest our American ration cards were taken away from us at the stores where we get our allotments. I'm sure this was done without your instructions. Can we get them back, please?"

"I know nothing about such things. You'll have to see the Kommissar."

I went straight to the room where I had been with Najder. Several people preceded me. Finally a weeping woman came out, and I heard the Kommissar calling, "Next!"

I went in timidly, expecting to be thrown out like the first time. To my surprise he got up and said with a smile, "Come in, Mrs. Warfield, come in and sit down."

I was so disconcerted by this affability that I didn't know where to begin.

"Are those sheets still on your mind?" he asked playfully.
"Yes, and blankets and food too."

"Well," he said, "the prison is not a hotel, but, really, we provide our guests with everything. However, if you insist, madam, we'll send him all you deem necessary."

This benign mood had to be taken advantage of. "Herr Kommissar," I said, "can't you release him? My husband is a pastor and of nonmilitary age. He went through a lot in Russia, and physically he cannot stand another term in prison."

"Unfortunately, the orders for his arrest—I mean internment—came from Berlin. It isn't as if they had been issued locally."

"Then please arrest me, too."

He laughed. "Why would you like to go to jail?"

"I'd feel happier sharing his life, even if we are not in the same cell."

He laughed some more. "That wouldn't help him and wouldn't do you any good."

"I see you do not understand," I answered with tears. "The Hindoos had the right idea when they burned a widow on her husband's funeral pyre."

Warsaw had been divided into sections which, in rotation, were deprived of electricity for weeks at a time. It was our turn, and I was sitting by a sputtering carbide lamp long after curfew when there was a ring at the door. Pola brought in a young man in a dark uniform. The visitor—he had uneasy eyes—took out his wallet and gave me a small piece of paper, tightly folded.

"I'll wait for the answer," he said.

I unfolded the slip. Good God! It was a note from Gaither. He asked for money, his safety razor, more bedding, and socks. He urged me to find blankets for the other internees, since few had brought their own. "The messenger is trustworthy," he wrote. "You can give him your reply and the items I am asking for."

The bearer of the note was one of the Polish wardens in Pawiak:

The next morning Pola and I took Gaither's bedding and

clothes to the disinfecting plant. It was on the other side of the city, and a blizzard was raging. But we discovered we had come too late. "Packages," said a sign over the door, "can be brought only every other day and up to 11:00 A.M." It was fourteen below zero, and I could have cried thinking of Gaither shivering. The remainder of the day we scoured the city for bacon and bread, for I wanted to send him some food also.

The search for blankets proved to be long and arduous. First I went to the Polish Red Cross. Officially, this organization had been dissolved by the Germans. The executive body—an international unit—still remained, but it was not allowed to hold meetings or to collect dues. Most of its leaders had been put in prison, and its stores confiscated. The few women who were surreptitiously carrying on the work told me they had no blankets and advised me to take my request to the Polish Municipal Relief Committee. This body took care of all the refugees and deportees—several million destitute people—but could give me no help. After two years of German occupation in a city of two million people, twenty-four blankets were hard to find. I went to various other agencies and organizations. At last I found twenty-three blankets—in the dissolved Boy Scouts organization.

The following morning I presented myself at the disinfecting plant so early that it was still dark. While waiting for my bundle, I joined a group of people who were there for the same purpose. A tall woman with her head drawn in stood next to me.

"Whom do you have there?" I asked.

"My daughter. She's eighteen. They arrested her on the streetcar, in a man hunt."

An old man said, "She has at least a chance. Not like my boy. He's twenty-nine years old. He was a workman on the railroad, like me. There was sabotage—someone set a barrel of lubricating oil on fire. He was taken with thirty-eight others, although they had been working on the tracks miles away from the fire. Somebody has to pay, the Germans say."

The disinfected things were put in a paper bag, sealed, and stamped. Now they were ready to be taken to the police station, which accepted parcels for the prison twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays. On Friday I set out at half-past five in the morning for Krochmalna Street. The city was pitch-dark, lit only here and there by an occasional street light. I had another two blocks to go when I noticed a double line of people on the sidewalk. The column ended at the police station. There must have been six hundred people waiting, and as I took my stand on the end, others continued to join the line. The temperature was ten below zero, and a sharp wind was blowing from the river. I shrank against the wall and prepared to wait. Hemmed in by the cold, the night, and fear, no one spoke. The stillness was broken only by coughing or the stamping of feet on the frozen pavement.

By eight, it grew lighter, but the line hadn't moved an inch. After several cautious glances at the woman ahead of me, I asked, "When do they open?"

"Open? They don't open."

"Then how do we give our packages?"

"The Gestapo drives over later in the day—sometimes at eleven, sometimes at two, sometimes not at all."

In the hours that followed I learned that the Polish prisoners (they were all political prisoners in Pawiak) were allowed only one small package every two weeks, sometimes once a month. Looking at the hundreds waiting ahead of me—this double line of shivering relatives—I was struck by the scale of our national tragedy.

The woman in front of me, when more hours of standing side by side had drawn us closer together, confided that her "prisoner" was a fourteen-year-old son. "They took him at three in the morning. I had a hard time waking him, children are such sound sleepers. When they dragged him to the door, he cried, 'Mama, don't let them take me away.' "

At eleven o'clock Pola came and took my place. I went up to the gate and, with the waiting mob protesting, squirmed through to the guards.

"I want to see the officer in charge," I said with false assurance. "I have come for the American Colony." I flashed my passport in his face, and he let me through. A howl of protest arose in the street behind me.

"Look at her sailing through! What is she? A *Volks-deutsche*? We've been here since five. Why should she be let in?" But I was inside and didn't care.

Jabbing with my elbows right and left, I wormed my way through a crowd in the yard until I reached a door marked Polish Police, Kommissar of the Seventh Precinct. I entered and asked the officer, who was surprised by my intrusion, that a special line be formed for those who had parcels for the American internees. I explained that these were not ordinary prisoners, and should be given special consideration. He gave his consent, and I went out and called all the relatives of our internees I had seen standing in line. Our parcels were collected and accepted, but it was already half-past three.

The entire work connected with the distribution of prison parcels was done by volunteer Polish women. They not only bore the insults and taunts of the Gestapo agents who supervised their work, but they also provided the bribes that induced the Germans to continue this favor.

The pattern of my days shaped itself around such occupations as visits to the Gestapo, hunting for food, going to German offices in connection with details of the management of our colony, and endless waits in front of the police station with parcels. After our first experience, these were deposited once a week with the colony, and then Mrs. Mossakowska and I took them to the police station, either in gunny sacks or, when there were many packages, in a droshky.

My frequent visits to the Gestapo were always preceded by a skirmish at the gate. There were two guards: they took turns at the window, issuing passes. Besides the mean, cement-faced, steely-eyed one, there was a fat, jolly guard who made no difficulties. On my way to Szucha Avenue, I would always pray, "Dear Lord, let it be the fat one." I came to dread the

encounters with the first man so much that I dreamed about him at night.

At the German *Schutzpolizei* (security police), on Danilowiczowska Street, where we reported every Thursday, I was greeted the first time by a fat policeman with feminine hips. He asked me politely to be seated. After putting my name and address in the files, he turned to me with a honeyed smile. "So you are going to do your husband's work now? *Schön*. You are a plucky woman. But it's best for you to understand from the very first where we stand. If you are truthful, hmm, helpful, we'll get on splendidly. If not—" He smiled very sweetly.

"Of course, I understand," I exclaimed, trying to look naive and solemn. "My husband always says that a good Christian abides by the laws and obeys the authorities."

He nodded approvingly. "The Gestapo notified you," he continued, "to bring us an up-to-date list of your members. Have you brought it?"

I put a copy of the membership on the desk. He picked it up and read the names.

"Fine. Now here is the name of Miss Caroline North. Can you tell me about her? What does she live on? Where does she get her money? She doesn't work, yet she seems to be well off."

It wasn't hard to see that his questions had a purpose behind them.

"Oh, Miss North," I exclaimed, wrinkling my nose. "She's just like most women; probably doesn't have a cent but keeps up appearances. Let me tell you something about her." I lowered my voice confidentially, and leaned closer. The policeman sat forward eagerly.

"You know," I whispered, "but please don't quote me! Oh well, maybe I had better not say it. It might get out, and would I be in hot water!"

"Don't be afraid. Not a soul will ever hear what you have to tell me."

"Well," I said, "I suspect her . . . really, I more than sus-

pect her, I know——” He sat forward even farther. “I know that she dyes her hair.”

Disappointment and disgust flashed over his face. He leaned over the list again. “Here is Mr. Ritter. Do you know him?”

“Yes, of course.”

“Where does he work?”

Without any hesitation, I began to prattle. “Oh, somewhere. I don’t know exactly. And who knows, maybe he doesn’t work at all. You know there is a rumor that he has not one but two wealthy mistresses. I’ve been told they shower him with presents. But anyway, I never liked him. I hate these light, blond, blue-eyed Nordics.” I knew this remark would placate him. He was swarthy.

I almost burst out laughing at the look he gave me. It was as plain as if he had said, “You poor blithering idiot. The Lord help the American Colony if you are in charge.”

December (continued) 1941

by GAITHER

OF ALL the political prisons in German-occupied lands, the most notorious was Pawiak. The building itself, or rather complex of buildings, is an antiquated structure, a relic of the Czarist regime and Poland’s nineteenth-century partitions. There was hardly a family in Warsaw that did not have someone confined there. We all knew under what conditions the prisoners lived—the cold of the unheated cells, the hunger, the appalling overcrowding, the lack of medical help, and the tortures to which men and women alike were submitted. A committee of Polish women did their best to improve the lot of the prisoners. Indefatigably they begged and collected funds, food, and clothing; some helped in the kitchens, seeing to it that the maximum good was got out of the food on hand.

The American internees from the first were treated differently from the Poles. Our food was better, and so were our quarters. As a special privilege we received the same fare as the patients in the hospital ward. For breakfast we had a cup of black, unsweetened rye "coffee" and a small slice of black bread; for dinner a vegetable soup. Supper was either a repetition of breakfast or, in exceptional cases, cabbage or turnips.

Some of our windows opened on the ghetto. They were not barred. Whenever we were safe from detection, we would lean out and motion to the few Jews that lived across the street. Some of them, in exchange for food and money, brought us packages—which we hauled up by means of strings and wires—containing articles which could not be sent in the official parcels, such as liquor, knives, razors, shaving equipment, and medicine. Some of the internees sent and received messages in this way.

We were delighted with our secret until one day Kommissar Märtz came to the prison, assembled us in our courtyard, and addressed us with great severity.

"You have been smuggling things through your windows," he said. "Two messages have been intercepted." He ordered those who were guilty to step forward. No one moved as he glared up and down the line. He repeated the summons, more sharply. Again there was no response. He was obviously enraged, and at a loss what to do. Methods applied to Poles did not seem appropriate for American internees. But there was no telling what he might think up, and I stepped forward.

"Nearly all of us have taken part in this action," I said. "If you want to punish us, you should do it collectively."

The Kommissar had no desire to take disciplinary measures against the entire group, so he exacted a promise that we would refrain from smuggling through the windows. We kept our word without much trouble, having found other means of getting notes and packages.

The prison was under German administration, but a few routine tasks were attended to by Polish guards, who tried to

make things as easy as possible for us. I remember them with regret, for soon after our departure most of them were executed and replaced by Lithuanian fascists and pro-German Ukrainians specially trained in brutality.

The Kommissar appointed me the leader of our group and gave me written instructions on how we were to act. The regulations, typed in German and English, were tacked on the door of our apartment. One rule ordered us to stand at attention when a German officer entered our quarters. The German prison staff chafed at this distinction, for Polish prisoners had to stand at attention whenever any German, even the lowest in rank, was present. Several times the staff tried to intimidate us into a more subservient attitude.

One day I was sitting playing a game with some of the other internees. German guards entered our room. My companions rose. I remained seated, since none of the Germans was a commissioned officer. One of the burly brutes strode up to me menacingly and shouted and shook his fist in my face. I looked at him calmly. At the same time I could not help wondering what he would do next. Quite unexpectedly he turned on his heel and stamped out, followed by the others. Similar bouts with our German guards became a regular feature of our life. Since they had instructions from Märtz, they did not dare lay their hands on us.

The tedium of the prison routine was unbearable. From eight in the morning, when the roll was called, until five or six in the evening, when it was repeated, we had nothing to do once the beds had been made up and the floor swept. Twice a day we were permitted to take a short walk in the yard, but as we had to march round and round in a small circle, we did not enjoy this exercise. Several times when only the Polish guards were present, we had real fun throwing snowballs. Like small boys, we made snow men, and Walter Fiderkiewicz showed himself to be a real sculptor. His statue of the sphinx drew praise even from the German guards. His next work of art, a bust of Winston Churchill, pleased them less. It amused us to watch the scowling looks they gave it during the day.

It amused us even more to find the next morning that, under cover of night, the figure had been trampled down. It was a childish yet real victory to discover that the Germans had not dared destroy the effigy of Winnie in daylight.

The building facing ours across the narrow yard housed the prison laundry. The women prisoners employed there were daily allowed an hour's exercise in our enclosure, and we took the opportunity to speak to them whenever the Germans were not around. They were of all walks of life and social position; their ages ranged from eighteen to sixty. Some had their children with them. One pushed a baby carriage around; her six-months-old child had been born in prison. All bore their confinement stoically, though they realized the chances of coming out alive were slim.

We were the only prisoners in Pawiak who were allowed any recreation, and we made good use of the playing cards, chess, dominoes, and checkers which were sent us by our families. When I found out that many of my fellow internees understood little English—some of those that were American-born but reared in Poland—I tried to teach them English by means of such campus classics as "Sweet Adeline" and "Polly-Wolly-Doodle All the Day." We had much fun singing these ditties. When the boys asked me to teach them "The Star-Spangled Banner," I found I could remember only two stanzas. I taught them what I remembered, and the rest I made up *ad hoc*, improving, I flatter myself, on Francis Scott Key.

Occasionally the monotony of our life was broken by untoward incidents. Edmund Rutkowski—the unfortunate butcher from Brooklyn—stirred up a good deal of interest. One night when we were awakened by loud singing, we found him on all fours, scrubbing the kitchen floor and singing lustily. Soundly bawled out, he went off to bed, but the next night he did it again. We saw to it that he did not sleep in the daytime, as was his habit.

Some of the Polish guards (I may speak freely of them now, since they have all been killed by the Germans) regularly smuggled letters and parcels for us. Thanks to them we

were able to elude the prison censor in our communications with our families.

Once I was walking in the prison yard when one of the guards, hardly moving his lips, said to me, "You will report tomorrow morning at the hospital. You have a very sore throat and a temperature. See?"

The next morning I reported for medical examination. A long line of patients was waiting in the dismal prison corridor. No one spoke, for fear of stool pigeons. Finally my turn came, and I said to the prison doctor, a Pole, "I have a very sore throat and a temperature," according to the instructions.

The doctor looked in my mouth and said, "I shall have to treat you. Come to the dispensary." He led me into a back room and withdrew.

A middle-aged woman stepped forward. I looked at her with suspicion. She was a total stranger, but her kind, intelligent eyes, reassured me. Swiftly she drew a crumpled note out of her sleeve. It was from Hania. I could trust the messenger and give her any information I desired, said the note. In a short conversation, the courier gave me news of Hania and the latest about the political situation.

Another time I was officially summoned to the prison office. When I entered the Polish warden's room, I was again confronted by this same emissary of the underground. We went into the question of obtaining releases by bribing the Gestapo. The woman's suggestions revealed a wide experience in this field. I presented the most pressing needs of our group, and she promised to help.

Once a Polish guard, in passing, managed to push into my hand a tightly rolled slip of paper. It contained a hastily scribbled message in English: "Meet me under the stairs at 1:00 P.M."

The signature was that of an American Pole who had once belonged to our colony. In the summer of 1941 he had disappeared. During the noonday walk I edged away from the others and hid back of the stairs. A detail of prisoners approached from the main prison. They went into the near-by

basement, where they began to sort potatoes. One of the men darted out and ran to me. He was emaciated, but I recognized the writer of the note. Hurriedly he told me of his arrest five months before and of his incarceration in Pawiak with Polish political prisoners. His was a typical case. He had committed no crime, no charges had been preferred against him, and he had no idea what he could be accused of. He begged me to have him transferred to our group, where life was a paradise compared with the rest of the prison. Swiftly he was back in line, carrying his load of potatoes.

I received another note: "I am in prison here. Do all you can to have me transferred to your group. Charles E. Thorne." This man, one of the most active members of our Colony, had been suddenly arrested six months before and I had made fruitless attempts to find out what was held against him.

When I presented the cases of these two Americans to Märtz on his next visit, he promised, in a vague way, to see what could be done. His manner was not encouraging however.

I also had a message from Rose, who had been arrested the previous summer. (Decidedly, all roads in Poland led to prison! Eventually all were sure to meet in Pawiak.) I ran across her one day when she came with a detail of women to sweep and scrub our part of the block. Poor girl! She had tried so valiantly to get Orlik and others out of prison. Even here, in Himmler's stronghold, she had lost none of her spirit and was one of the mainsprings of the prison underground.

A week before Christmas Kommissar Märtz, during one of his tours of inspection, asked, "Would you like to hold a Christmas service? It would have to be in English."

"Indeed I would, but I have only my New Testament here. It wouldn't be much of a Christmas service without a few carols."

"I'm sure this can be arranged. What else do you think necessary?"

I sat down and wrote Hania requesting a gown and two hymnals, and the Kommissar took my note and promised to have it delivered.

There were Jews, Roman Catholics, Protestants of different denominations, and atheists in our group. Very few knew the same hymns. I myself, not having conducted an English service for some years, could barely remember the doxology, and I recalled only two stanzas of "Silent Night." I wrote out the words carefully, made several copies for my companions, and proceeded to rehearse my heterogeneous choir. The boys practiced assiduously.

December (continued) 1941

by HANIA

MY TRIP to Bory had to be canceled, since I was under police supervision and could not leave Warsaw. Bruno was to go instead, and take our little Christmas gifts. He would give Father and Mother all the details which I dared not put in my letters.

At every opportunity I begged the Kommissar to grant me an interview with Gaither. He always refused—rudely when others were present, apologetically when we were alone. Two days before Christmas, when I was again in his office—two other Germans were present—he suddenly said to me with a strict and official air, "You will report here tomorrow shortly before eight."

I walked out, but in the corridor he unexpectedly appeared at my side and whispered, "You are so anxious to see your husband. Maybe I can find a way tomorrow. Not a word to anyone though."

I flew home to make my preparations. With Pola, whom I had to take into my confidence, I went at once to hunt for sausage, lard, bread, onions, and sugar. I bought a few presents also, and my joy was complete when, through a *Volksdeutscher*, I got some apples. For an unaccountable reason,

we had been told to take our weekly parcels, this time, not to the police station, but to the Gestapo headquarters. After delivering them on Szucha Avenue, I thought, "Tomorrow is Christmas Eve; why couldn't I take a little Christmas tree with me for Gaither?" I bought a tiny tree and trimmed it that night.

The next morning I was at the Gestapo shortly after seven. It was bitterly cold, and a biting wind was blowing from the Vistula. The guards refused to let me pass, saying that the offices would not open before eight. With my tree and a few bundles, I walked up and down the street, hoping that no policeman would find me suspicious enough to arrest. At eight o'clock I climbed to the fourth floor.

In front of the Kommissar's office, the parquet floor was being polished by a man who whispered, "You're early today." He was a Pole who had been employed in the same building before the invasion. He always greeted me in a friendly way.

"If you are waiting for the Kommissar, you are out of luck. He has a meeting and won't be back before eleven."

I could have gone home to eat breakfast, but thinking of the grim-faced watchdog at the entrance, I preferred to stay.

The Kommissar came by and said, "I won't be through with my work before two. Then I will be ready to take you to Pawiak."

I showed him my Christmas tree and he laughed. "All right, you may take it along."

Shortly after two he appeared, and his orderlies took my parcels. We went down into the courtyard, where two cars drew up. A civilian carrying a photographer's tripod climbed into the first car, which was filled with packages for our internees. The Kommissar asked me to get into the rear of the second car, where so many packages were piled around me that I was practically concealed from view. He seated himself beside the driver.

"I'm actually smuggling you into the prison," he said. "You couldn't have got a pass into Pawiak, let alone the ghetto. No

one will ask questions, though, when you are with me. But you won't be able to leave until I am ready to go."

We drove rapidly through the center of the city and turned into Bielanska Street. When we reached the ghetto entrance, the Kommissar leaned out and called to the sentries. They snapped to attention, then hurriedly opened the gates. We sped on, and the Kommissar asked, "Have you ever been in the ghetto?"

I shook my head.

"It's just as well. Don't look around. It isn't a pretty sight."

Indeed it wasn't, I knew it well. The usual crowd of skeletons was shuffling around and, seeing the police car, rapidly disappearing in doorways and alleys. The car stopped in front of a high wall, the chauffeur sounded his horn, and an enormous iron gate slid open. We bounced forward over rough cobblestones and stopped. I was so excited that my purse, muff, and the parcels I was holding slid to the ground as I got out.

The bare, cobblestoned yard was surrounded by bleak buildings. In the enormous, squat edifice before me, row upon row of little barred windows pierced the thick walls. Though I could see no faces I felt that thousands of eyes were on us. Some of the windows were shuttered with boards. These were cells in which prisoners were kept in solitary confinement, sleeping on bare cement floors. I remembered what had occurred in the same yard two years before, when Pawiak, already teeming with political prisoners, admitted relatives on certain days. Prisoners and relatives could see each other's faces through the barred windows, and even exchange greetings. One day, when the crowd was thickest, a truck with a machine gun mounted on it drove up. In a few moments the unsuspecting visitors were sprayed with steel. Few escaped.

The Kommissar, surrounded by underlings, gave orders in a sharp, staccato voice. I was struck by the change in the face of this man, who could at times be a polished gentleman. His eyes had narrowed down to slits, his chin and cheekbones stood out razor-sharp, and he looked more than ever like a

death's-head. I shuddered as he came back to me.

"I have sent for your husband. When he comes you will be allowed to speak to him for only five minutes. I will have to be present."

While we waited I could not keep my eyes from the prison windows. He gave me a malevolent smile and said, "What are you thinking about, madam? Or would it be indiscreet to ask?"

"I'm thinking," I replied, "that some day we will tear down this prison. Stone by stone, like the Bastille, until nothing is left of it. Some day, on this very spot, there will be a beautiful park, where children will run, laugh, and play. Our children, everybody's children."

"And have you set the date yet?"

I heard footsteps, and Gaither, followed by a guard, came out of a small gate in a near-by wall. He hadn't expected me, and for a moment stood petrified. I was struck by the change that two weeks in prison had made in him. The Kommissar looked at his wrist watch and said, "Remember. Five minutes."

It was hard to talk, with Märzt and several of his men hovering around us and the shadow of a machine-gun turret overhead. I had carefully rehearsed what I would say and ask, but now, holding Gaither's hand in mine, I could only stammer incoherently. Gaither, on the contrary, seemed to know exactly what he was doing. He drew a small slip of paper from his pocket, on which he had jotted down questions and instructions in anticipation of such an opportunity. Clearly and rapidly, he stated what the men needed most—more blankets and clothing especially. He even managed to whisper, "I shall try to bribe them to let me go. I'll let you know how much it will cost. Find out from Mr. Rylski if he can advance the money."

I wanted to tell him how I missed him, how hard it was to get along without his courage, but the Kommissar called out, "The time is up." Then to Gaither, "Now I want you to pick out the chapel for your Christmas Eve service."

A fleeting kiss and goodbye. It was all over so rapidly that I could hardly realize it had been more than a dream. Gaither

disappeared with the Kommissar, and an orderly led me to the prison office where I was to wait.

December (continued) 1941

by GAITHER

AFTER looking over the several chapels in Pawiak, I chose the one in the woman's prison as the most suitable for our service. Then I was taken back to our quarters to prepare for the service, and a few prisoners were detailed for the job of dusting and mopping the chapel, which had not been used for a long time. Ours was to be the first religious service within the prison walls since the German invasion.

Märtz himself had brought the Christmas food parcels which the families had prepared for the internees. Before the service he had us all line up in our little yard. As he read our names from a list, each man stepped forward to receive his package. The Kommissar had also brought a news photographer, who set up his tripod. And as we stood receiving our parcels from the hands of a German, our pictures were taken. Undoubtedly these photographs were later released in German papers with the caption, "American internees receiving Christmas gifts from German authorities."

Next we were marched to the chapel. Attendance was compulsory for all the internees.

It was a strange congregation—men of all ages and walks of life, accidentally brought together, and linked maybe for many years to come. There was much I wanted to say, and the moment could have been one of great comfort and meaning. But behind these sad-faced companions stood a row of guards and Gestapo men, with the Kommissar in their midst. Their presence made a cynical joke of it all.

We sang the much practiced "Silent Night," and I read the

Christmas lesson from the Gospel of St. Luke. I spoke briefly. The Germans, I knew, were straining their ears to catch anything *verboten*. We closed the singing of the doxology, slightly off key. After the benediction I turned to the exit, but the Kommissar stepped forward briskly and shouted, "Stand where you are! Turn this way please!"

The gloom of the chapel was rent by a blinding flash. We had been photographed again. My blood boiled at having thus been used as a tool for Nazi propaganda.

While I was taking off my Geneva gown, the Kommissar came in and said, with a self-satisfied smile, "Nice, wasn't it? This is the first time I have been in church since joining the Gestapo."

My brief sermon had been a flat, colorless message, but when we got back to our rooms the boys thanked me. One, a Jew, was deeply moved.

"You had to be careful, I know, in what you said, but I could understand it all. I knew you had the suffering of my people in mind as you spoke."

Another internee, an American of Polish descent, said, "You didn't mention the Poles once, and yet there was Poland in every word."

I was grateful to see that, in spite of all, those who were in need of comfort had found it in our simple service.

Before leaving, Märtz and several of his aides came in to wish us "Merry Christmas" officially. Märtz made a little speech, to which I answered for our group. Then he asked us to sing. As we sang some of the songs I had taught the men, he listened approvingly and tapped his foot. When we sang "Tipperary," however, he cried, "Stop! You are not singing it right." He sang one stanza himself to show what he meant. He was obviously trying very hard to give the impression of being "a jolly fellow."

As a climax I announced the national anthem, and the men rose. Some of the Polish Americans could hardly say Good Morning in English, but they now stood proudly, solemnly bellowing at the top of their voices. By the volume of the

noise they produced, they tried to compensate for their limited speaking vocabulary. The Germans, duly impressed by the racket, listened stolidly at attention. (It is customary to stand at attention when a national anthem is sung. Märtz was punctilious in such matters.) When we had finished, they bowed ceremoniously and filed out.

Proud of our performance, we opened our parcels. The presents and food were spread out around Hania's little Christmas tree. Some of the boys had managed to smuggle in liquor, and the feasting, shouting, and singing went on until early morning. The sounds of our celebration seemed almost a sacrilege in this gigantic tomb of the living dead. But later we were told that our merrymaking had caused rejoicing among the Polish prisoners, who looked upon it as a manifestation of the strength and invincibility of the United States.

December (continued) 1941

by *HANIA*

THE prison office where I waited for Märtz was a large hall, subdivided into several sections by railings and glass partitions. The man who had brought me spoke to the clerk behind the desk and left.

After standing for a long time by the door, I felt tired and dizzy, and asked if I could sit down. Gruffly the official indicated a chair behind the railings, beside one of the heavily barred windows. As hours crept by, guards and Gestapo men walked in and out. Once in a while they came up and examined me offensively. One of them asked if I was the new German matron. Another, with a broken nose and cauliflower ears, took out a pad and pencil and questioned me in a threatening tone until still another said, "*Du dummer Esel* ("you stupid ass"). Leave her alone. She has come with the Kommissar."

"It's Christmas Eve," I kept repeating to myself with a vague feeling of unreality as I watched the light grow dimmer outside. "Christmas Eve." The first star appeared, and I thought, "Everybody is sitting down at this very moment to *Wigilia*." No, not everybody.

The outer door opened, and armed Germans brought in twelve men, one of whom had an angry welt across the cheek. At a sudden gesture from a guard, he nervously shrank back. The others were pale but showed no signs of fear. They were questioned and registered, and their wallets were taken from them. Then the clerk rang, and two husky wardens appeared and led the new prisoners away. I had a glimpse of a vaulted, narrow corridor, dimly lit with yellowish bulbs. My heart contracted.

A Gestapo officer stepped in with a typewritten sheet. He dropped the paper on the desk and left. The clerk rang again. To the guard who answered he said, "Two releases," and gave him the paper.

The guards brought out two Poles. One was a gray-haired man with the gnarled hands of a farmer; the other, tall and young. Both were extremely thin, and their faces had the characteristic greenish prison pallor. Without hurry, the clerk fetched a folder, thumbed through it in a leisurely fashion, and at last produced a document. After identifying the farmer, he gave him back his personal papers and wallet.

"Count your money first," he ordered.

The farmer obeyed.

"Is it all there?" asked the clerk defiantly.

"Yes, sir," said the man after a brief hesitation.

"Sign the receipt."

A slip of paper—his release—was given him. Filled with joy, he almost ran out of the room. Through the window I watched him stop at the gatekeeper's lodge, then disappear as the gate slid open.

The tall prisoner was still standing, waiting his turn, his eyes riveted on the clerk. But the play was too good to let it end so quickly. The clerk had no intention to hurry. For a while

he read a newspaper. Then he picked his teeth, lit a cigarette, rearranged the pencils on the desk—pretending to have forgotten the Pole's presence. At last he turned to the waiting man.

"What, you here? Ah, that's right. You are also going home for the holidays." His laugh rang out like an obscenity. With studied slowness he went through the same motions as in the first case, then said, "You may go."

The prisoner's eyes blazed with joy. Perspiration stood out on his forehead. He bowed and turned. But the German's fist came down on the desk with a crash.

"Here you! Come back! Is that the way to leave? Salute."

The Pole returned to the desk. I shook as violently as he did, when drawing himself up, he saluted. The clerk smiled maliciously and waved him off. However, he was screaming again before the tall man had opened the door.

"Damn you! Come back!"

I thought the man would faint as he leaned limply against the door. My heart pounded like a hammer, and my muscles ached to strike the tormentor. I could imagine myself digging my fingers into his thick neck and beating the square head against the wall until the brains gushed out. In a flash I realized the joy there can be in killing. (Where was that time when Mother had said, "If only we could hate them!") The stillness was again broken by the German. Rocking with laughter, he sputtered, "You've forgotten to sign the receipt for your money."

The prisoner's hand was trembling so that he dropped the pen. He signed but his face did not lose its tenseness, as he slowly straightened and, motionless, watched the Gestapo agent.

"What are you waiting for? Get out before I change my mind."

Groping backwards, with one hand extended behind him, the Pole slowly made his way to the exit. With his eyes glued on the German, he grasped the door handle, pressed it, and

stopped. He waited. When nothing happened, he suddenly jerked it open and ran out.

Night had come, and the lights were switched on. I wondered if I had been forgotten. If so, how could I get out of the prison? How could I get out of the ghetto? I was getting desperate when a Gestapo man stamped in, beckoned to me, and led me to a waiting car. A rear door stood open. I looked in, but I hastily drew back. All the places were taken.

"Get in," the orderly urged. Then I heard the Kommissar's voice from the front seat.

"I'm taking my men back to town. You'll have to get in with the boys."

There was nothing else to do. Without a word I squeezed in between two uniforms. We drove through the dark streets of the ghetto, where not a soul was in sight. Anxious to escape this heinous company as soon as possible, I said timidly to the Kommissar, "Will you let me off, please, as soon as we are out of the ghetto?"

"Certainly. Are you going any special place?"

I had planned to see Mr. Rylski immediately about Gaither's ransom. Fearful of disclosing my intentions, I said, "No, I'm going straight home."

One of my escorts, in an attempt at gallantry, began to question me in the best official manner. Name, age, address. No sooner had I mentioned my street and number when one of the officers exclaimed, "Why, that's on our way. We can drop you there."

"No," I cried nervously. "I'd rather take the streetcar."

"Oh, so you do have business in town?" added another.

Maybe it was an idle question, but I thought I detected in it more than a perfunctory curiosity.

"I just thought I'd prefer to get some air."

"Get some air on a streetcar? Nonsense!" They overrode my objections. "We'll leave you on your doorstep. It's no trouble at all."

I felt faint. My brain reeled with bewildering thoughts. People will see me, a woman alone in a car full of Gestapo

men. What will they think? Certainly a traitor. I'll be branded, I'll be ostracized. The underground will mark me for execution. I began to pray as I had never prayed before. "Oh Lord, let an accident happen. Let us run into the streetcar ahead. Let me die at once before we reach our street."

As if in answer to my supplication, the Kommissar spoke up. "We'll have to stop at the local office on Krucza Street. I have to leave some documents there."

I was determined to leave this party at any cost, and here was my chance. When the car halted, the man to my right opened the door. As he stepped out to deliver the documents which the Kommissar was holding, I followed him in a flash. Märzt, seeing me on the pavement, jumped out also.

"I see you are determined to go. Well, we won't detain you. Goodbye."

"Goodbye," I said, "and thank you for what you have done."

His "boys," not wanting to be outdone in politeness, had climbed out also and now they surrounded me on the sidewalk. One after another, they insisted on wringing my hand in parting, boozing heartily, "*Fröhliche Weihnachten!*" ("Merry Christmas!")

I thought of the crimes these same hands had committed, of the blood that was on them. I wanted to snatch my hand away. But I didn't dare.

When they had gone I was overcome by shame and revulsion. I crawled into the nearest entrance and sat on the floor for a long time with my head on my knees.

At home, Pola threw her arms around me.

"I thought they had arrested you too," she sobbed. Then she helped me undress and put me to bed.

I spent Christmas Day lying like dead, with my face to the wall.

December (continued) 1941

by GAITHER

AFTER Christmas two of the internees were released. One, a young boy, had tuberculosis of the lungs; in prison he had spent most of the time in the hospital ward. The other man had bribed his way out, which encouraged those of us who thought his example could be followed. The next time I was taken to Szucha Avenue, I asked the Kommissar, when he and I were left alone for a moment, "How much would my release cost? I am not wealthy, but I think my church could pay five thousand dollars."

He smiled. "I am afraid this is not possible in your case. You see, you are the only American whose arrest was ordered from Berlin by name." I knew what he meant. The Germans had two kinds of arrest: one was an order for the seizure of ten or fifty or a hundred men, and people would be taken at random to make up the number; the other was made from a specific list of names.

January 1942

by HANIA

SHORTLY after New Year's a smuggled letter from Gaither notified me that his hope of release had fallen through, and in the evening Pola announced a caller. The cadaverous figure with dark glasses that stepped into the room frightened me.

Without a word of introduction the strange man began, "Tomorrow morning your husband will be brought to the Gestapo headquarters. He'll phone you from there, so don't leave the house. He will probably tell you to come to the Kommissar's office. Have a thermos flask of hot coffee ready and some bread, since he'll be without breakfast."

It was so mysterious that I didn't know what to think.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"That doesn't matter." Without wasting any time on amenities, he said goodnight and left.

I went to Ruth's apartment and told her. She thought it was a trap. Pola was also inclined to think so, but I decided to take the risk. After all, I regularly went to the Gestapo, and there would be nothing unusual in going once more.

By seven in the morning I was dressed and sitting at the telephone. Pola, who had prepared the thermos bottle and sandwiches, declared, "I had enough of waiting for you at home on Christmas Eve. I'm going with you."

Ruth said she too would go.

Around eleven the telephone rang, and Gaither's voice came over the wire as natural and calm as if he were sitting in his study. He asked me to come to the Kommissar's office. It was exactly as the man with dark glasses had said.

The Kommissar very amiably directed Gaither, Ruth, and me to a small sofa, then returned to his desk at the opposite end of the office, where he busied himself with correspondence, showing that he would not listen to our conversation. But the oak-paneled wall behind us might conceal a listening device, so I was careful.

"I've brought you some food," I said to Gaither.

Ruth and I spread out what we had brought on a small table. A clerk came in, and when he saw the food on the table and Gaither eating heartily, his eyes bulged.

"That's all right, Johann," said Märtz. "Leave them alone and come here."

Johann sat down with an expression of foolish astonishment on his face. I murmured to Gaither, "Pola's waiting in the corridor."

He winked. When he had finished eating, he walked up to the Kommissar and asked if he might go to the men's washroom.

"Certainly, it's right across the hall."

Gaither stepped out and in a little while was back. The

telephone rang, and when the Kommissar had picked up the receiver, Gaither whispered quickly, "Pola's gone home. I saw her." Then he added, "Charles Thorne is in Pawiak but not with us. Find out if he can't be transferred to our group."

The interview did not last long, but I went home strengthened and comforted. Pola was waiting for me at the door. Throwing out her chest with pride, she thrust at me a thick sheaf of letters.

"Smuggled out of prison! Right under the nose of the Gestapo." She exulted. "When Pan Pastor walked out of the office, he came to speak with me, put his hand in his pocket, and whispered, 'Open your handbag, Pola.' I obeyed, and he dropped this package into it. He said I was to mail the letters." They were the letters of internees who did not care to have their correspondence censored.

The following day I went back to Szucha Avenue to see what could be done for Thorne. When I mentioned it to the Kommissar, he said, "He was arrested by a different department, and you will have to make inquiries elsewhere." He couldn't or wouldn't give me information and merely directed me to the filing department.

I hurried to a room on the second floor. On enormous tables set against the walls were countless files. Thumbing through them were three agents with brutish faces, and I was glad I was not alone with them.

An old woman had preceded me into the room. She addressed one of the agents timidly. "I was sent here by the prison authorities. It's about my son's gold watch."

"I don't understand you," he said in German.

The woman looked at him with helpless eyes, and I said to the agent, "Do you mind if I interpret for her?"

He glared at me balefully. I repeated the woman's words in German, and he answered—this time in Polish—"What watch?"

The old woman gave the name and prison number.

"We'll have to look it up." He went through the cards, drew one out, and said harshly, "It says here that you've received the clothes, underwear, and other personal belong-

ings. There is nothing else." Indicating that had finished with her, he asked me, "What do you want?" When I inquired about Thorne, he said, "You'll have to go to the third floor. Room 311."

In the passage bundles of clothing were being handed out by a German to some women. They were wives and mothers receiving the personal effects of executed prisoners.

In Room 311 they knew nothing about Thorne, and I was told to see a certain major on the fourth floor. From the fourth I was sent to a room on the second floor in the left wing. This part of the building was impressive—better kept and furnished than the others. At the door to which I had been sent, I heard voices within, and I knocked. No answer. I knocked again. Thinking I had heard somebody call out, I walked in. It was a sumptuous apartment, with flowers in crystal vases and thick Persian rugs on the walls and on the floor. I went forward, then stopped with embarrassment. A bemedaled officer was sitting behind a large desk by the window, with a blond Valkyrie on his lap.

"What do you want?" he roared, pushing the girl off and leaping to his feet. "How did you get in?"

"I'm sorry. I was told to come here. I've been to the fourth floor——"

He snatched the admission slip from my fingers. "So you say Kommissar Märzt directed you here? We'll see. Come along!"

He tore down the corridor, up the stairs, and I after him, scared out of my wits. He yanked Märzt's door open and roared, "Did you tell her to come to my office?"

Märzt seemed too astonished to say anything.

The questioner turned on me. "Why did you lie?"

Indignation drowned my fear. "I wasn't lying," I said hotly. "I've been sent around for the last two hours, from door to door. I want to find out why a member of the American Colony has been arrested."

My boldness impressed him, and he answered, more calmly,

"Find out if you can, but don't go roaming through the building."

He hailed a passing clerk. "Here! Take this woman where she wants to go."

I was taken through a long passage and into an office at the end. The man who received me had an answer: "Thorne was arrested for political reasons."

"Political!" I exclaimed. "What political reasons?"

"Radios."

"But American citizens are allowed to keep their radios. If this privilege has been withdrawn, why haven't we been notified?"

"It has not. Thorne was arrested because he had several sets." Thorne could not be transferred to the internees' quarters, he said, before his trial had taken place.

I sped home and burst into Ruth's apartment. "Ruth! How many radio sets do you have?"

"My own and three others."

"I have two besides our own," I said. "Have you a hatchet or a meat cleaver? We've got to get rid of them today, right away." I explained about Thorne. We spent the next hour chopping up the radios friends had left in our care. Later I remembered it as the most pleasant of my war experiences. Swinging my hatchet lustily, I said to Ruth, "I know what I shall do some day when I am very rich: for recreation I'll hack radios to pieces."

That night the wood in the radio cabinets came in very handy. For once Ruth and I had a good shampoo and a hot bath.

It was a heavy blow to our colony when, after innumerable petitions and parleys, we were denied our former food rations. I was told we would have to be satisfied with what the Poles were getting. I asked the Nazi official who had communicated the refusal if he thought that German nationals in the United States had also been limited in the amount of food they could buy. He did not try to hide his feeling of hatred and envy

as he answered, "*Na, Amerika!* That's a rich country. They have too much of everything. They need us Germans to show them how to manage things."

Many members of our church and strangers continued to come to Gaither's study, expecting me to carry on his pastoral duties. The visitors mostly fell into two categories: those in need of material help and those who looked for sympathy and guidance. Day after day I sat listening to sorrowful happenings without any means of helping. It was hardest for us when children came to the door—many of them from the ghetto. At best there was little to give, and often there was nothing.

As soon as things became more settled after Gaither's arrest I went to see Lucy. She had been away with Ella and George. She was limping, and her legs were bandaged. What had happened was just one of those incidents so frequent since the searches for food on the trains had begun. Friends of hers who lived in the country had heard of her poverty and the children's poor health, and they had written her to come for a visit. "We have potatoes and some flour, and our goat gives good milk, but we have no sugar, so please bring your own."

By skimping, Lucy had managed to scrape two pounds together, and they set out one day with this treasure in the suitcase. They were to go by train to a small station where their host would meet them with a horse and carriage. Just before the last stop, S.S. guards got on the train to search the passengers. Lucy, knowing she had nothing illegal with her, was calm. But the railroad police pounced on the bag of sugar. "For my own use," said Lucy.

They threw the package back into the suitcase, slammed the lid, and tossed the suitcase out on the platform.

"Oh, please!" cried Lucy. "I don't trade. It's for my children. They're sick. Look at them!"

In answer the S.S. hit her in the face.

While the search moved on to the next compartment, Lucy told Ella and George to get off with the rest of their baggage. Then she ran to find the commanding officer. She hoped that if she put her case before him he would have the confiscated

goods returned. But he ordered two S.S. guards to beat her with cowhide whips. The officer watched indifferently. The whips cut until her stockings were in ribbons and blood trickled down. The officer made a sign, and the Black Shirts stopped the flogging. Then Lucy was put in a cellar under the station. After a few hours she was led back to the same office, where the same officer, with a typewritten statement in his hand, proceeded to question her. He got her name and address and the children's ages, then asked, "Where is your husband?"

"I don't know."

"You lie! You had a card from him in July through the Red Cross. He is in England with the British forces." They knew everything about her. While she was in the cellar, they had been in touch with the Warsaw Gestapo and had checked her record.

"I could send you to Tremblinka for smuggling food," the officer concluded, "but I'll be lenient. I'm sending you to Germany."

She was led off to the city jail, where she spent the night in a cell jammed with many like herself—all to be shipped to Germany for labor. In the morning the warden called her name. She came out into the corridor. A German major was standing there.

"I was present when you came in yesterday. I feel that my colleague was rash with the whip. But these mistakes will happen. I'm releasing you. You don't look strong, and you'd be no good in a factory or on a farm."

He took her to a car in front of the jail, and when they had crossed the town, he asked, "Where do you want to go?"

Lucy gave her friends' address, and he offered to take her there.

"Thanks. I'd rather walk."

"But it's far. And your legs—"

"I'd rather walk."

"Have it your own way. You damn Poles will keep your pride, won't you!"

Gaither frequently sent messages through the Polish guards, and I wrote back the same way. This contact, though slight, was a great solace. The internees were relatively comfortable. Having learned the ropes, we were able to supply them with an adequate amount of food. They were treated well, and we knew they were safer where they were than those outside the prison. We were gradually settling to our new routine when another blow fell.

Early one January morning Pola came into my bedroom in a breathless state. Experience had taught me what this portended.

"All right," I called out without waiting for her to speak. "Tell them I'll be right there."

But already three Gestapo men were in my room. Hastily I drew a corner of my quilt over Nora Waln's *Reaching for the Stars* (death penalty for reading it!) and wondered why three had come to arrest me. However, their behavior was startling. Instead of hollering and ordering me out of bed, they saluted smartly. One of them handed me an envelope. It contained an official notice enjoining me to inform the colony that the internees were to be taken from Pawiak to Germany. As a special favor we had been granted an interview with them. The farewell meeting was fixed for Tuesday, January 6, at nine o'clock in the morning, at the Gestapo headquarters.

The announcement threw our colony into a turmoil. No one knew where the men were going or how long the separation would last. There was much fearful speculation about the kind of camp they would be sent to.

The Polish Red Cross, evidently notified by the underground, let us know that they were preparing packages of bread, sugar, tobacco, soap, and clothing for those of our men who had no money to buy these essential items.

On Tuesday a large number of relatives assembled in our office, and we went in a body to the Gestapo. Down a red-carpeted corridor we were led into a large hall. Ruth, in her capacity of secretary of the colony, Paul, Bruno, Pola, and Cessak were with me.

The tumult was great when the internees were brought in. There was so much to say, and so little time. Families settled in little groups, their heads together, whispering, trying to crowd, into one short hour, talk that would be denied by years, perhaps, of separation. I found Gaither besieged by internees and their relatives. When he finally broke away from them, we steered towards a quiet corner to have a few moments to ourselves, but on our way, first Pola, then Cessak, intercepted us. They said goodbye, then Ruth came up with questions about the church work. Soon another wave of internees and their wives importuned him. A woman begged him to make her husband take liver pills after every meal. Two brothers asked him to settle a money quarrel. Watching people pull and tug at Gaither, I was conscious of every wasted second, and I wept. He tore himself away and we sat down. We talked a few minutes, and then the Kommissar stepped into the middle of the room, slapped his hands together, and cried out, "The internees will form ranks, and the visitors will leave."

The internees were herded to one side, and we were hustled out into the corridor by police agents. Gaither whispered to me as I passed him, "Try to wait downstairs." Slowly we went down the red-carpeted steps which were watched by sentries posted so no one could stray into other parts of the building. In the vestibule I managed to edge away and slip behind a large pillar. The internees would leave by this way.

Standing in the shadow of the pillar, I looked towards the stairway, when suddenly a gruff voice spoke behind me.

"So I've caught you! Hiding, eh?" It was one of the watchdogs from behind the reception desk. Thank goodness it was the fat one. Seeing how frightened I was, he grinned and said, "It's all right with me. But hide behind that other pillar. Someone is likely to see you here."

I changed pillars, and a moment later heard the tramp of many feet. Gaither was among the first, and I darted out from my hiding place.

"When are you leaving?" I whispered quickly.

"They haven't told yet. I'll try to let you know. If possible, meet us at the station."

I phoned Märzt. He refused to tell when the transport was leaving. I pleaded. He would divulge neither the time nor the station of departure.

"Promise at least," I said, "that you will not have us arrested if we are there to wave goodbye. I don't mind telling you that we are going to search the tracks for them." I hoped, if not Gaither, the underground would let us know where to go.

"Try to find them." He laughed maliciously.

Before noon an anonymous voice phoned us: "The gentlemen will be leaving from the Western Station." This message was followed in an hour by another telling us that the plans had been changed, it was impossible to know exactly, but probably the internees would be entrained at the Eastern Station. I got in touch with the wives, and we set out shortly after three o'clock, although the transport wasn't to leave until around six.

We stamped our feet, rubbed our faces, and clapped our hands to keep up circulation in the bitter cold. We bribed a railroad man to tell us which trains were going to Germany, and he pointed out two. We peered into all the compartments, but our husbands were not in them. Trains arrived and departed. The sun set, and night came. At last, remembering the curfew, we had to give up. We went home swallowing our tears. Did the Kommissar enjoy his victory as much as we felt our loss?

January 1942

by GAITHER

WE CLIMBED into the van that was to take us back to Pawiak prison. After the many weeks of separation from our families, seeing them had excited us so that we sang and shouted at the top of our voices. We bellowed every American song we knew. Pedestrians were startled. A few who caught the English words timidly waved to us.

Back in the prison we prepared for our journey. Each one of us had several packages of food and bundles of clothing sent by relatives or the Polish Red Cross. I wrapped my loaves of bread, jars of carrot and beet marmalade, and the small piece of bacon which Hania had conjured up somehow. This supply of food seemed large. In the camp in Germany it was to vanish only too rapidly.

Our destination and even the hour of departure were kept in great secrecy. Probably the Gestapo feared a demonstration at the station.

Up to the last I had hoped that Thorne and Patek, the other American confined with the Poles in Pawiak, would be permitted to join us. Just before we left, a Gestapo man came to tell me that these Americans could not be interned until they had been tried and found innocent. He added, "I want you to give me the names of two American Jews living in the ghetto, so that I can send them with you to Germany."

"Nothing doing, brother," I said to myself. Aloud I replied, "I don't know any."

"You don't understand," he insisted. "It would be a real kindness to them."

But I wasn't going to be taken in by this Germany "kindness."

Much later, when the news of the bloody liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto reached me in America, I understood too late that this Gestapo agent had meant well. If it had not been for

my understandable distrust, I might have saved two human beings from a horrible death.

At dusk we were taken, with our belongings, across the Vistula to the suburbs of the city. Here, in a freight yard, surrounded with guards, we were loaded into an antiquated third-class coach.

I had attempted to notify Hania where to meet us. Unaware that my last message, the only one that contained correct information, had not reached her, I threw open the window when our train came to the Warsaw Eastern Station and leaned out looking around. At this moment some of the boys began singing. The guards banged the windows shut and threatened to shoot if anyone tried to open them. Too bad, for we had planned to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the Main Station. Soon the last houses of Warsaw disappeared.

That night, sitting on our hard benches, we sped through Poland and crossed Czechoslovakia. In the morning we arrived at Vienna and were transferred at once to another station. Märzt, who with two other Germans was convoying our group, had arranged here for a hot meal. In the afternoon we left Vienna, and in the middle of the night we arrived at Salzburg. I had the dubious honor of sharing a compartment with the Kommissar and his aides. I wedged myself into a corner and pretended to doze. Thinking that I was asleep, the Germans made out their expense account. I gathered that they had been allotted a certain sum to cover the expenses of the trip. They wrangled over what to withhold out of it for themselves, came to an agreement, and divided the loot. It was amusing to hear them.

On January 9, early in the morning, our train stopped at a little snowbound station. Laufen, read the station sign. We were told this was our destination. In the low barracks to which we were taken, we received rye coffee and bread. Then we were given dog tags with numbers on them to hang around our necks. Mine was No. 50.

After a physical examination by the camp doctor, we were marched through the little town, then under a large porte-

cochere and into an old castle. Here we were counted, and checked and rechecked, both by the Gestapo who had brought us and the military authorities who were taking us over.

In departing, Märtz drew me aside. "Be sure to tell the camp officers how well you were treated by the Gestapo."

Indeed we had been treated with unwonted gentleness by that dread organization. Why, I could not guess, but the fact remained, and at the first opportunity I told the post officer about it. If I had hoped to learn something from his reactions, I was disappointed. Captain Krampfel only laughed wryly.

We had been told that for some days we would not be permitted to communicate with our families, but before our Gestapo chaperons departed one of them whispered to me, "Would you like to write a line to your wife? I expect to be back in Warsaw in five or six days, and I shall be glad to deliver it."

I scribbled a note hastily, and he put it in his pocket.

January (continued) 1942

by *HANIA*

MRS. ALBRECHT, the *Volksdeutsche* who had come to my home after Gaither's arrest, had been sincerely anxious to help. I had done her an injustice by suspecting her motives, and when I met her on the street I was glad of this opportunity of thanking her.

I stopped her. "I'm glad to see you."

She looked nervously around and said quickly, "Not here. There's a doorway across the street. We can talk there."

In the shelter of the doorway I tried to thank her for her advice, but she cried and said, "We are miserable sinners, and our sins are visited upon us. *Ach, mein Gott.*"

"What's happened?"

"Karl, my husband, has been arrested."

"Arrested? Didn't you say he worked for the——?"

"Yes, but you don't know how it was. We were Germans, but born and raised in this country. When the war broke out we lost everything like everybody else. It was hard—no job, no money—so we signed up as *Volksdeutsche*. It meant work, good pay, food. We thought we weren't doing any harm. The employment office notified Karl there was a job for him. He was told he'd be used as an interpreter for the Gestapo. He didn't know what that meant and accepted. I'll never forget the first day he came home from work. They had questioned a young boy, almost a child. Karl had to interpret. The kid died before they were through. *Ach*, it was terrible how Karl carried on. Couldn't sleep, couldn't eat, wept and prayed all night. In the morning he went to resign, but they told him that the only way he could leave the service was feet first. He stayed. But he did what he could to help the people: The first time he was caught he was only reprimanded. The next time they threatened. A few days ago he was sent with another Gestapo man to arrest a whole family. He let the old mother escape. The other fellow reported him. Now they are sending Karl to a concentration camp in Germany. He won't come back."

We parted, and I never saw her again.

Ruth, Najder, and I talked it over: if Gaither was to be released, it would have to be managed not locally but through Germans in Berlin. Among the several *Reichsdeutsche* we knew, a few had influence with the *Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei*. I wrote to them. Only one answered promising to help; the others didn't reply.

Our men had been gone for two weeks when I had another early-morning phone call.

"Come to my office at the Gestapo as soon as possible," said a strange voice. "I have a *Brieflein* (little letter) for you."

A little letter indeed! Probably a warrant for arrest.

A middle-aged man greeted me coyly. "Come in. I have a surprise for you."

I looked at him darkly, wondering what he would spring on me, but he smiled. "Try to guess what I have for you here." He put his hand in his pocket.

"I'm not good at guessing," I answered somberly.

He produced a letter out of his pocket, with a blandishing smile. "From your hubby!"

I tore the envelope open. "Just a line to tell you that we arrived safely. I'm well and comfortable in our new quarters. I can't give you our new address yet, but will write soon. Love, Gaither." I ran home singing.

But the day so happily begun was not to end so. In the afternoon came a telegram from Father. Mimi had scarlet fever.

"Pola," I called. "Pack my little suitcase. I'm going to Bory at once."

"You can't," said Pola. "You've got to get a traveling permit first."

I'd forgotten the ban!

"And what about the police?" Paul reminded me. "You have to report every week."

"This, too, I had forgotten.

"I'm going to the police. I'll show them the telegram. I'm sure I can wangle a short furlough, and I'll see about the traveling permit."

The police chief with the feminine hips was hard as rocks. He read the telegram indifferently. What was the little child to him?

"You've got to report next Thursday as usual," he said. "You may go until then, but I can't make any further concessions." Thursday was two days off, and the trip one way alone would take more than three days on account of the snowdrifts.

I pleaded. Seeing me cry, he told me to get out.

"Maybe the Kommissar will prove more human," I thought, hurrying to Szucha Avenue. But he was in Vienna, and his locum tenens remained deaf to my entreaties.

Distraught, I spent the next days telegraphing Bory and imagining all the possible complications scarlet fever could

bring on. Fortunately Mimi's case proved a light one. A week later Father informed me that she was out of danger.

In January the rumor spread that all fur garments would be confiscated. The office of our colony buzzed like a beehive.

"What are we going to do?"

If this was true, I wouldn't be able to go outdoors until May, for I had only one winter coat. But Mrs. Spiewak said, "I've heard that only Jews have to give theirs up."

The following day I had an opportunity to speak with Märztz, who had returned.

"Is it true that our fur coats are to be confiscated?" I asked.

"The regulation concerns only Poles and Jews. The property of American citizens won't be touched. Tell the members of your colony that in case anyone takes their coats, they should report to me. I'll see to it that the coats are returned."

At home I called up our Polish friends throughout the city. Remembering that our wires were tapped, I sent out the alarm, babbling happily.

"My dear, this nice Kommissar of ours! I was so worried about my coat—you know, these silly rumors—but he says that there is nothing to fear. Only Jews and Poles will have to give up their furs." The warning spread with lightning speed, and at least some were able to hide and save their furs.

Soldiers stopped people on the streets and pulled off their wraps. In the country, sheepskin coats, woolen shawls, and even feather beds were confiscated. People hid whatever they could and frequently destroyed what they had rather than surrender it. Ir came from Bory and told us—one could not write about such things in letters—how Mimi had come to Mother with her own little winter coat.

"Granny, will you please hide this? Maybe in a snowdrift in the garden. I don't want the Germans to get it."

Mother explained that she needn't fear. Her coat was too small for a soldier.

"I know. But don't they have children of their own?"

The confiscated clothing, which was to be made into mili-

tary vests and caps for the eastern front, was stored in Warsaw and other cities. But the Germans were not to enjoy all their plunder. One fire after another broke out in the warehouses, so that for days the air was saturated with the smell of burning hair.

The first letters from the internees began coming in, and we learned that they were in Ilag VII-C, in Laufen, Upper Bavaria. The messages were far from happy. Although Gaither always wrote cheerfully, other men complained that they were hungry and losing weight at an alarming rate. I wrote Pastor Erik Christensen, representative of the Y.M.C.A. War Prisoners' Aid in Berlin, begging him to let the International Red Cross know about conditions in Ilag VII-C and urging that food packages be sent there. I also obtained permission—it took days of intensive effort—to send individual food parcels from Warsaw. As some of the men had no relatives, it was up to the colony to provide for them. Neither Ruth nor I could have found sufficient food for so many had it not been for the officially dissolved Polish Red Cross.

Since our American food rations had been taken from us, Pola and I found it increasingly hard to manage. Our soup got more watery every day and the helpings Pola served smaller and smaller. Miss Esten, Mrs. Polkowska, Cessak, and Paul, who was living with us, were still sharing our dinners. In January I realized that it would be impossible to continue to feed so many. Cessak, whose family was in the country, and Paul, whom we looked on as a member of our family, would have to remain with us. But I would have to make other arrangements for the two old ladies. With Mrs. Polkowska I was lucky. Mrs. Mossakowska told me of a soup kitchen where, for a small monthly fee, I could assure her a daily meal more nourishing than the one I could offer. But when I tried to register Miss Esten, my request was turned down. I turned again to the Polish Red Cross.

"As you know," said Mrs. Sobotowa, "officially we don't exist. Whatever is done, is done by individuals. The only way

we can help your protegee is to find a person who will give her meals privately."

A woman with sad eyes had been listening to our conversation. This woman, Mrs. Nadolska, said she might be able to do something for Miss Esten and asked me to phone her on Friday. But when I phoned her home, the answer was that she was out. I called up for several days in succession, but the answer was always the same. I went back to the Red Cross.

"Mrs. Nadolska was arrested the day you met her," said Mrs. Sobotowa. "The Germans cannot dissolve our executive body, since it is an international organization. But they have means to liquidate it. Every few days someone is arrested, and soon there will be no one left."

Ruth and I finally succeeded in locating a soup kitchen that could take Miss Esten. It was high time, for our food supplies had petered out. The vigilance of the police had tightened around Warsaw like a noose, and raids on market squares and shopping centers grew so frequent that for days on end we did not dare approach them. Food smugglers went into hiding, and it took the flair of a hungry bloodhound to detect their lairs. The smallest purchase required hours of stair-climbing and all our energy.

In the spring, few farmers had been able to plant and sow in the vicinity of Warsaw on account of troop movements, and the little grain they had, had been confiscated by the Wehrmacht.

The percentage of ground straw or sawdust in our bread had risen up to 40 per cent. We all got cramps and heartburn from eating it. Luckily, on Mother's advice, we had made, in the fall, a large barrel of sauerkraut. Its rank odor permeated not only the whole apartment but even our clothes and hair. We called it "Quelques Fleurs d'Hitler" and ate it raw twice a day until the very sight of it made us gag. Though it was, according to dietitians, a good source of Vitamin C, all the symptoms of malnutrition appeared. Our gums got tender and sore, ever new cavities appeared in our teeth, we felt weak and tired, and our memory deteriorated. My hair came out in

strands. At last the cold and hunger got the best of me, and I fell ill.

Danuta Ciazynska, whom Pola insisted on calling after I had been in bed several days and getting worse, said it was rheumatic fever.

One day she said, "How about having your parents and Mimi come to see you?"

"No," I said. "Mimi is barely out of bed after scarlet fever. She couldn't travel in this weather."

The temperature at that time stayed around twenty below zero, and trains would be stuck in the snowdrifts for days. Neither mother nor Father was equal to such a trip.

"But do you think there is a chance of getting Gaither home for a few days?" I asked. "I'd like to talk with him. You know, just in case——"

Paul inquired at the Gestapo and was told that Ruth, as the Secretary of the American Colony, would have to write a petition. A German police doctor's statement would have to be attached. It was no easy matter to locate one, and even harder to induce him to make a call. In order to bring him to my bedside, the influence of a German whom Ola knew had to be used, and an exorbitant fee had to be paid.

The doctor who came was a young man with a brisk, military manner and several dueling scars on his face. From the threshold he cast one look in my direction, then said harshly, "There's nothing wrong with you. Why the devil was I called?"

I did not answer. He came over to feel my pulse. It evidently wasn't normal, for he pulled out his stethoscope and for some time listened to my heart. I closed my eyes and tried not to remember what his ordinary duties were—examining the mangled bodies of prisoners beaten to death, telling torturers how much pain a man can stand without breaking, trying out poison gas and deadly injections on women and children.

He put his instrument away.

"Is it a medical statement you want?" he asked in a much

kinder tone. "Do you want to say goodbye to someone who is in prison?"

"I'd like to see my husband. He is interned."

"All right. Send somebody for the paper tomorrow. I'll sign and stamp it."

Paul brought the document to me. It stated that it was advisable to parole the husband without delay on account of the patient's condition. Ruth attached to it the petition she had written and took it to the Gestapo. She was told to come back for the answer the next week. I had to smile when Ruth told me. Next week—?

Danuta had said that I was to be kept warm, so Pola moved me into the little back room. It was dismal and dark, with a single window giving on a narrow ventilation shaft, but it had flues in the wall and we had a small coal stove put in. We usually had it warm enough to keep the bottle of olive oil on my dressing table from coagulating.

In our quarter the electric current was disconnected again, and as I lay in bed the carbide lamp sputtered and hissed and threw enormous shadows on the bare walls—shadows of Pola sitting by my side, of Paul studying, of Aunt Genia, who came in to get warm, and at times of Najder, who brought in his writing from Gaither's ice-cold study.

There was time to think about many things, waiting for "next week." Funny how afraid of death I had once been. But that was long ago. My thoughts turned to my childhood. I remembered the cakes grandmother used to bake, and her famous rose preserves; the suckling pigs, roasted whole, that used to be served for Easter at Uncle John's—pigs garnished with parsley and elaborate dressing, and with tusks of horseradish in their snout—"

I felt it was undignified to be thinking of food at such a time, but no great thoughts came to me, so I said to Pola, "Tell me about yourself when you were a little girl."

She could talk for hours about the farm near Poznan, the work in the garden, the cows.

". . . and my father was a handsome man. Tall and broad

and as bald as an egg. With whiskers that you could tie in a bow behind his head. He had a good life and the Lord gave him a good death."

"A good death"—the peasants often repeated that expression. How I used to laugh at the locution. Could death ever be "good"? Now I knew.

I thought of roadside ditches, of the cellars under the Gestapo buildings, of execution squads. To be in my own room, in my own bed, was in itself good. Pictures of deathbed scenes from old etchings floated before my eyes: the principal figure in the center, the immediate family and entire household assembled around in a decorous half-circle. Ah, they knew how to live in those days—

Ruth had gone to the Gestapo for the answer. Pola and Paul waited for her in the hall. Somebody came in—my heart started to beat fast. Whisperings. Silence. Paul sauntered in, looking so determinedly cheery that I did not have to ask.

"You don't have to tell me. It was foolish to expect it. Selfish too. After all, what is the life of one woman in the face of the tragedy of millions?"

Paul rebuked me. "That's the way Germans talk. Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Of course it is important. Every man is important. That's what our civilization stands for. Millions are fighting for it right now, and here you go totalitarian on us!"

"Why didn't Ruth come in?"

"She didn't have the courage to tell you."

"How silly! Go and bring her in. I want to hear why they refused."

Ruth was relieved to know that the shock had not killed me on the spot.

"The beast!" she sputtered, speaking of Märtz. "Do you know what he said? It's too bad Mrs. Warfield is ill, but I can't let her husband come back. Tell her that German generals are dying now, with no one there to hold their hand. She will have to make up her mind to die by herself."

When Danuta came I said to her, "Those darn Germans

are only too anxious to see us die. I'm not going to do them that favor. I'm going to get well!"

However, times were not conducive to a rapid recovery. Food was scarce. Occasionally friends helped us to get an egg or a small piece of bacon. Once or twice Pola made an expedition into the country and brought back a pint of goat's milk. Sometimes she went to Kerceli Square, where black marketeers sold grain. The wheat or rye she bought--when lucky--was dried carefully and ground in an old coffee mill. It yielded a coarse meal which was used to thicken our daily soup. We tried to cook it as a cereal, but in that form it was unpalatable. There never was enough to eat. Pola had continuous headaches. Paul went around like a hungry young wolf, nothing but skin and bones. At night I would wake up thinking about butter and meat and sweets, then lie for a long time unable to go back to sleep.

January–April 1942

by GAITHER

OUR life in Ilag VII-C, as our camp was officially designated, began with the recording of personal data. (How many times, in various places, I had given such details during the last two and a half years.) Our personal effects were examined. Our passports, money, knives, flashlights, and jewelry were taken from us. Canned goods of any sort, medical supplies, and photographs of relatives and friends were also taken. We were shepherded to the delousing room and made to strip. Shivering with cold, we went into the shower room, but that was even colder than the hall where we had undressed.

We turned to the guards. "Hey! How long are we going to stay here naked?"

"Two or three hours," was the reply.

Without further ado we began to retrieve our overcoats from the pile of clothing to be disinfected. The sergeant in charge shouted, ordering us to return the coats. We shouted back, insisting the place was too cold. With rousing arguments we won our point. Not only did we keep our overcoats, but the sergeant had some fuel brought in, and a fire was made in the stove. We huddled around it, pleased with ourselves. But when the sergeant brought in the disinfected bundles and dumped them on the wet and muddy floor, we howled again. He became one of the most badgered officials in the camp.

Our next struggle occurred as soon as we were brought to our quarters—two dim rooms already jammed with internees who had preceded us to Laufen. Our Warsaw group demanded better quarters. To the surprise of the other Americans, who had meekly accepted everything the Germans ordered, we won out. With an official promise that we would be moved, we unpacked. The next day I was received by the captain in charge of accommodations, and he assigned us a room of our own. The twenty-three of us from Warsaw moved into a hall on the third floor. Its bunks were double, not triple, tiers. Mine was an upper, close to the old-fashioned iron stove.

Our prison was a seventeenth-century castle on the banks of the Salzach River, which divides Austria from Germany. It had been built as the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Salzburg. The view from our windows was magnificent. On one side we had the town of Laufen, a winter resort; on the other, across the river, an Austrian town which nestled at the foot of a high ridge. On clear days we could see the spires of Salzburg, to the south, and the snow-covered peaks of the Bavarian Alps. I often wondered which of the mountains was the site of Hitler's hide-out, Berchtesgaden.

The commander of our camp was Colonel Koch, a gray-haired, mild-mannered, stoop-shouldered man. The chief censor was Captain Krampfel, a former language teacher. His English was excellent, but we neither liked nor trusted him.

Two noncommissioned officers were directly in charge of the internees.

Our days never varied. Up at seven; hasty toilet under the cold water faucet; breakfast prepared by ourselves in our quarters; and tidying up. At nine o'clock a whistle announced roll call, which in good weather was held in the courtyard and otherwise in an unused chapel on the ground floor. Then Captain Krampfel received the reports and made announcements. He indulged in fatherly talks interlarded with sarcastic remarks. For the benefit of those American Poles who did not understand English, I had to interpret the captain's admonitions into Polish. It was also my unpleasant duty, as company commander of all the internees of Ilag VII-C, to call out, after the morning announcements, the names of the internees assigned to camp chores. From eight to twelve men were usually detailed for sweeping the main building, but after a heavy snowfall twenty-five to thirty were needed to clear paths in the courtyards. These tasks always aroused a great deal of dissatisfaction. After roll call, the sick reported to the doctor, a German major. Several internees who had been medical students, assisted him. At 12:30 came the main meal, brought in large containers. At 5:00 came supper. Then we were free to do as we pleased until lights were put out at 10:30. Half an hour before bedtime, German guards made a check of the prisoners.

From ten in the morning till four in the afternoon we were allowed to wander freely around the yards of the castle. There was little danger of escape, for we were completely surrounded by walls, barbed wire, and many sentries. All in all, it was not a bad place. There was no comparison between Laufen and a concentration camp.

Ilag VII-C housed American internees from all parts of Europe. The number varied. The largest number while I was there was 262. New ones were constantly added, and a few were released from time to time. Most of these lucky ones came from within Germany, where their relatives and friends interceded on their behalf. The largest groups of internees

came from Poland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. In the Czechoslovakian group I found an old friend and colleague, Dr. Joseph P. Bartak, of Prague, a missionary of the Methodist Church.

Among the internees from Germany were many Nazi sympathizers and many who, though probably loyal Americans, were great admirers of German *Kultur*. They formed a compact group and roomed together. The rest of us avoided them. We called their quarters the German Room. One of them was an outspoken and fanatical admirer of Hitler's. He was about twenty-five years old and had at one time been a student at Yale University. He and his mother had settled in Germany. Though they were Anglo-Saxons they had become passionate disciples of National Socialist doctrines. The young man spoke with the zeal of an apostle and maintained that the National Socialist emphasis on sacrifice was comparable with the teachings of Christianity. But the German authorities showed no gratitude. They delighted in assigning some of the camp's dirtiest jobs to this Star-Spangled Nazi with a distaste for manual labor.

Jack Taylor, one of our five Negro internees and a former heavy-weight boxing champion, was a favorite. We liked to hear him tell how, in one of his greatest fights, he had won a ten-round decision from Max Schmeling. He entertained us with his sparring. He was also a professional masseur, and many of us went to him for massage.

Three of the Negroes and a Hawaiian were well-known vaudeville stars. There were several other professional entertainers, and we had no trouble organizing evening performances.

The prisoners' greatest ill was tedium. To combat it, we organized all kinds of courses, with Dr. Bartak as the director. There were classes in English, German, Polish (I myself taught it), mathematics, and mechanical drawing. As soon as a contact was established with the Y.M.C.A., this organization sent us books. It also sent games and sports equipment—balls and bats for softball, baseball, and ping-pong, and a soccer ball.

On Sundays, Bartak and I alternated in conducting religious services. Because there were many Roman Catholics among us, I was instrumental in bringing over, from a near-by Polish war prisoners' camp, an army chaplain who celebrated Mass and heard confession during Holy Week. At all the meetings, services, and entertainments, a German was always present.

For a while Rutkowski gave us little trouble, but he resumed his antics and his condition got worse. He seemed to be possessed of a restlessness that kept him wandering day and night. I noticed that whenever a box, a string, a tool, or a utensil was needed, Rutkowski could produce it. We found that he was making expeditions to the German storerooms, from which he always brought back something. We stopped this but could not prevent him from night prowling. One night, a guard on duty heard someone singing in English. He rushed upstairs. When he got to the second floor he heard the voice on the floor above. On the next landing he heard it from below. He called other guards. They looked all over the building, but the castle was large and corridors were dark and winding. Luckily Bartak, on going to the washroom, had run into Rutkowski sneaking down the passage in stockingfeet. He shooed him off to bed just in time.

One afternoon Rutkowski appeared in the yard dressed only in a pair of slippers and a bathrobe. Suddenly he threw these off and, entirely naked, climbed over a fence which barred the way to one of the outbuildings. While the sentries shouted and brandished their guns, he scrambled up the steps to the little platform overlooking the prison yard. The guards took aim, but our pleas saved him from being shot. We lured the poor man back to the ground. But then he began to breast-stroke through a drift of snow. I coaxed him into his dressing gown and slippers. A few days later he watched some Germans cross the courtyard, flung open a second-story window, and bombarded them with bottles. The camp authorities sent him away—to a sanitarium in Bavaria for observation. (In June he was shipped back to Warsaw and released.)

The first day of our arrival in camp, we had been given food from the garrison kitchen, and we had congratulated ourselves on the change from the Pawiak fare. But the very next day a separate kitchen was set up for the internees, and we had to do our own cooking, under the supervision of a German soldier, who was a wheelwright by profession. Instead of rye coffee, we got peppermint tea for breakfast and supper. The first day it was only unpleasant; later it became abhorrent. We had meat once a week in microscopic quantities; a vegetable and a small amount of sugar occasionally; a piece of local cheese every eight days. The cheese deteriorated steadily in quality until, famished though we were, we could not swallow it at all. Our rations of dark rye bread were insufficient.

From the very beginning I had trouble getting the men to do the daily chores. But as time went by they grew really sluggish and apathetic, until one day two of the boys said they were too weak to do any work at all. Both looked sick. I took them to the German doctor and, knowing what was wrong, asked for larger food rations. This demand brought about a general health examination during which all of us were weighed. In less than four weeks, since coming to Laufen, we had lost from ten to twenty-five pounds each. The drop was startling, considering our sedentary life.

The Germans relieved us of all heavy labor. French prisoners of war—evidently better fed than we—were brought into the camp whenever shoveling of snow had to be done. Our food rations were not increased. By the end of February our strength was ebbing.

One morning several large trucks drove into the courtyard. They were filled with cardboard boxes identical in shape and size. Red Cross packages at last! In a moment every window was jammed with hungry men greedily watching the unloading. Each man was told to bring an empty box or carton or other receptacle to hold the articles to be distributed.

Jubilation was great when the prisoners lined up single file before the storage room window to receive their parcels. All grumbled when they saw the method of distribution. The

Germans undid each individual Red Cross package in the addressee's presence, counted the items, tore off all wrappings, opened the tin cans, and dumped the contents into our receptacles. (They threw away the tins and wrapping paper to make sure that we were not receiving any messages.) Tobacco got mixed with sugar, chocolate with canned fish, coffee with prunes. But even this did not dampen our joy. At last the smokers, who had been rolling their own cigarettes—newsprint stuffed with peppermint leaves and bark—had real smokes. Mr. Schlaak (he had been the Ford Motor Company representative in Warsaw) hadn't seen any coffee for over a year, and he exchangedhardtack, chocolate, fish, and even beef, for all the coffee he could get. From now on Red Cross packages arrived regularly. Our strength slowly returned, and we even gained some flesh.

The Swiss Government, our protective power, which had been delegated to report on conditions in the camp, sent representatives. They were followed by representatives of the War Prisoners' Aid of the International Y.M.C.A.—Mr. Hugo Cedergren, of Sweden, and Pastor Erik Christensen, of Denmark. The latter handed me a small package containing a few cookies and a piece of smoked sausage, which he had undoubtedly saved from his own rations. These two Y.M.C.A. men did much to make our prison life happier.

The internees became more and more restless. The number of infringements of regulations increased. Punishments were administered according to German Army rules. Solitary confinement from six to eight days was the usual penalty. Four of our men got fourteen days on black bread and cold water, with a hot meal every five days. They were locked up in a wing of the castle that contained tiny cells. We considered it our duty to keep up their morale and smuggled food and tobacco to them.

Discontent increased when the Germans peremptorily appointed Mr. Broeder as camp senior. According to the Geneva Convention, it was our privilege to elect our camp senior, and we spent a few lively days electioneering. The majority sup-

ported the candidacy of Russell Singleton, a businessman from Prague who had the confidence and approval of the whole camp and spoke German fluently. But just before the election Captain Krampfel called me into his office and—revealing the German officers' ingrained distrust of democratic methods—announced that Colonel Koch had appointed Broeder.

This violation of our rights made the camp boil with indignation. The camp senior's job was important, as he was our official spokesman and representative in dealing with the International Red Cross and the Swiss Government. Broeder (he had been the manager of a Woolworth store in Berlin) was a decent chap, but the internees distrusted him because of his German descent and long residence in Germany. Peace wasn't restored until Broeder appointed Singleton his assistant, making him camp senior in effect. This arrangement worked out.

The garrison in Laufen was gradually replaced by new contingents, and the change in quality and appearance was revealing. No longer were they tall, strong, broad-shouldered Bavarian farmers. The new ones were near-sighted, sickly, or just very young. Some limped. A few had served on the eastern front and had been assigned this sinecure as a rest.

Discipline was also deteriorating. One morning when we were taking our constitutional in the prison yard, we saw, outside our enclosure, a bored sentry lean his gun against the fence and take off his helmet and kick it around. He hailed a passing girl and chatted with her. A sergeant noticed this unmilitary behavior and ordered him back to his post. The sentry said insolently, "Have you ever served on the eastern front? No? well, then I won't take orders from you."

He was led off to the guardhouse, and a new sentry was posted. Ordinarily such behavior would have entailed grave consequences, but the rebellious veteran was back at his post in a few days.

Captain Krampfel announced one morning that a Gestapo official had arrived and that those who had been mistreated before reaching camp could file complaints with him. This

new agent used the office that had been assigned to me as company commander of internees, and I was able to watch his activities. Many of the internees had had their property unlawfully taken by German civilians and officials; others had been manhandled. But as they were mostly Americans of Polish descent, with relatives still in Poland, they did not hasten to complain. Experience had taught them that any attempt to press one's rights brought persecution—if not on themselves, on wives, children, and parents. Nevertheless, several ventured to present their case. One told how a neighbor, a German, had come to his farm and with the assistance of the German police had taken all his horses, cows, and farm implements. To me this was nothing new; millions of Poles were being robbed in this way, without hope of restitution. Among those who had been beaten, only one had the courage to complain at this time—an American Pole in his sixties.

March 31 started like any other day. The roll call over, Captain Krampfel stepped forward in his irritating manner to make announcements. Then he asked, "How many of you would like to return to America? Raise your hands."

We stood as if turned to stone. Then whispers swept down the lines.

"He's kidding. It's April Fools' Day tomorrow."

"This must be a German trick."

In our isolation we had heard nothing of the intended diplomatic exchange of prisoners, and the very idea of a return to the United States before the end of hostilities seemed preposterous. However, after a morning of feverish discussion most of the men asked to be put on the list. Singleton and I took down their names.

Of the few that did not make the request—most of them belonged to the German group—some were held back by family ties, others by business. The men who had German wives still hoped they would eventually be released. Several simply disliked America and preferred to live in Germany.

One man declared that he would not return to the United States as long as Roosevelt was president.

Our doubts about the reality of our liberation were dispersed when a representative of the German Foreign Office arrived. He notified us formally that the Swiss Government would handle the exchange of American and German nationals. When he added that our Department of State had stipulated that the internees at Laufen be included in the exchange, a thrill ran down the ranks. Uncle Sam remembered us and took an interest. No longer were we forgotten men, abandoned. There was a change in the camp aura. Our apathy vanished, and the Germans became more and more friendly, more anxious to please. During all the previous months of our captivity we had only twice been taken for a walk through the surrounding hills, each time closely guarded by armed soldiers and police dogs. Now those who wished could take hikes almost daily. I was one of the first to take advantage of this privilege. Fifteen of us, escorted by only one guard, roamed the countryside for a whole day.

We had heard that twelve of the British war prisoners confined in Laufen had escaped through a tunnel they had dug under the yard. The Germans asserted that all the fugitives had been captured within a few days, but their various accounts did not tally, and we had good reason to believe that the Englishmen had got safely away. Anyway, our captors considered a closer guard for us unnecessary. Who would try to escape with a return to America in the offing?

As we wandered through the woods of the mountain range we had so longingly gazed at from the windows of our prison, our guard lost his way. There were neither landmarks nor people to show the right direction. We made a joke of it. "You see," I said, "there are no more Germans left in this country. The only human beings are a few imported foreigners."

But someone was chopping wood not far away. Then the sound stopped, and a gray-bearded man came out into the clearing. We all laughed when we found that he was a

Ruthenian who had been brought here for compulsory labor all the way from his native Eastern Carpathian Mountains.

We passed a number of women working in the fields. They were barefooted and poorly clothed, but from the becoming manner in which their dresses were worn and their kerchiefs tied, we knew at once they were Polish girls. We called and waved, and they answered excitedly. There were many of these girls in the neighborhood of Laufen. They were underpaid and worked hard at long hours. Unable to change either job or place of residence, and under constant police supervision, these girls were virtual slaves, and yet they remained unbroken in spirit and impervious to attempts at Germanization.

Spring 1942

by *HANIA*

I WAS still very sick when Gaither wrote me about the diplomatic exchange of prisoners. He wanted to stay, for he thought that wives and children would not be included in the repatriation. It took no end of persuading to make him sign up. With a typical masculine lack of logic, he would not understand that I would prefer to have him far away in America, free and well fed, than closer, it is true, in Laufen, but just as inaccessible and a prisoner and suffering from hunger. He reluctantly gave in. But first he made one more attempt to get a release. The German acquaintance who promised it informed him that Berlin would probably agree if the Warsaw Gestapo stated they had nothing against his return. Gaither asked me to obtain the statement.

I was barely able to walk and had to be carried down from my fifth-floor apartment. (The elevator had not been in operation since the invasion.) Bruno and Paul had their difficulties

on the winding stairway, and the descent took a long time. They put me in a ricksha, and Paul accompanied me.

Märtz greeted me with, "Well, who would have thought that you were still of this world! I'm glad to see you. Please sit down."

"I decided to postpone my exit," I retorted. "The end of this war will be interesting to watch. I'd hate to miss the last act."

But in answer to my request he said very earnestly, "I could give you such a statement, but I won't. Don't think that I am trying to make things harder for you. Now I am speaking not in my official capacity but as an individual. Take my advice. Don't let your husband come back to Warsaw. You can't tell what might happen to him here."

I thanked the Kommissar and did not insist. I knew what he meant. As an internee, Gaither was under the protection of international law. In Poland he was defenseless and, like the rest of us, at the mercy of any German walking down the street.

The General Gouvernement, during the winter, had become a slaughterhouse for Jews brought from Germany, Austria, and occupied countries. Thousands of them were killed outright. Reports of the executions reached us daily. Some of the transported Jews were brought to the Polish ghettos. One such group was received in Warsaw with great ceremony, to our amazement. It was reported that Fischer, the Governor of Warsaw, sent out a delegation to greet them, and a special building in the ghetto was cleared for them. They were veterans of the First World War and relatives of men who had fought for Germany in that war. They were told that because of this they would be permitted to keep all their valuables and money and would be spared the hardships imposed on Jews in general. The next day, after they had unpacked, the Gestapo descended on them and robbed them of everything. Many were left without an overcoat, even without a blanket. None of the promises was kept.

On my first visit to the Gestapo in 1940 I had been told

that all Poles would be wiped out by 1950. Now it looked as if this program was being stepped up. Executions became so frequent and numerous that the place of execution had to be changed from the Parliament Gardens to the village of Palmiry, near Warsaw, where large numbers of corpses could be disposed of in huge ditches dug in the Kampinos Forest.

As long as the weather remained very cold, deportations continued. Peasants in the district of Zamosc were thrown out of their homes so room could be made for German colonists. Among them were some of our church members. One Methodist woman aged sixty-seven came to Warsaw bringing the only thing she had managed to take away—a small potted geranium. Several people we knew came from the city of Bydgoszcz—they had fled before they could be deported. They told me of what had happened in the fall: hundreds of Poles ejected from their homes had been taken to the concentration camp in Potulice. Children, women, and men, young and old alike, had been locked up together in unheated barracks. They slept on bare cement floors, without even straw to lie on. Without milk, fat, or meat, on a diet of dry, coarse bread, water, and cabbage—and potatoes on holidays—they were dying off so rapidly that not one child under twelve was left alive.

Similar reports came from Torun, where 4,000 people were arrested late in September and put in the vacant building of a former lard factory. By March, 980 of them had died.

Considering the Poles sufficiently softened up by two and a half years of such terror, the Germans started, in the provinces of Poland annexed to the Reich, a campaign of enforced Germanization. This *Eindeutschung* was made as simple as possible. Poles were given forms and advised to sign up as Germans. Each form was handed out by a *Block Leiter*—a political watchdog assigned to maintain the morale of the population. Neither a German name nor German descent was required. As a warning, the forms bore the slogan: “With us or against us! He who does not sign is our enemy, and with an enemy we shall deal according to the law.”

Certain rewards were tendered for this "voluntary access": the children of an *Eingedeutschter Pole* (a Germanized Pole) would be allowed to go to school; he, himself, would have the privilege of being immediately drafted by the Wehrmacht. After a probationary period of ten years a Germanized Pole might be granted certain liberties and rights as a citizen. Confiscated property, however, would not be returned to this adopted son of the *Vaterland*.

Jack Adamski had been arrested before Christmas. He had been caught redhanded tearing down German posters. Hearing that he had been released, I went to Filtrowa Street. I hardly recognized Mrs. Adamska. Not a trace remained of the merry, roly-poly woman she had been.

"How is Jack?"

She didn't speak right away. "He is in the hospital. He gets the best care. His doctors are old friends of ours. But there isn't much they can do. He was beaten on the abdomen with sandbags. Those narrow sacks of canvas filled with damp sand are even worse than steel springs encased in rubber. They damage all organs permanently." She began to cry. "And his mind is gone. He was so gifted. In another year he would have graduated from high school. He whimpers all the time and tries to hide whenever someone comes into the room. He is afraid even of me. He doesn't know me. At night he wakes up shrieking. Oh God, how I pray he might die."

Some days later Jadwiga Pajakowa came to see me. She had heard that I had been ill and brought me two eggs. Flowers as gifts went out of style when the Germans came in. She looked ghastly.

"I want to tell you about my sister," she said. "Poor Barbara. I, at least, have happy memories of my years with Stefan. She won't have even that." Barbara had been engaged to Taddeus Klanowicz, a road construction engineer, a nice serious-minded young man.

Two weeks before Jadwiga's visit—it was a Sunday—the three of them had had dinner together at her home. Taddeus

had left shortly after one o'clock, saying he had to meet some friends in Zielonka (a suburb of Warsaw). He was to come back and spend the evening with the two sisters. At four the telephone rang. His mother was on the wire.

"Barbara, a terrible thing has happened. The Gestapo have notified me to get Taddeus' body."

The three women went together. In a small house, surrounded by sentries and groups of weeping people, they found him. He was lying staring at the ceiling. Six other bodies were in the room. Five bodies, they learned, had already been removed. The floor was covered with blood, and they had to wade through it. It was slippery.

Were the murdered ones members of the underground? Was the massacre a revenge for an act of sabotage? Witnesses said that thirteen men had gone into the little house, and that—a few minutes before the Gestapo had surrounded it—one of them had stepped out on the balcony and had ostentatiously lit a cigarette. While the shooting took place inside, he had remained on the balcony, pressed to the wall. No one knew if he was a traitor or simply luckier than the rest. No one knew who he was. Anyway, there were only twelve corpses.

With Gaither's return to America in the offing, there was nothing to hold me in Warsaw any longer. I sent a petition to the police on Danilowiczowska Street and another to the Gestapo, requesting permission to move to Bory.

At the end of April I was still waiting for the answer. One day Pola came home with a quart of wormlike tiny fish that could be bought on the black market. They were too small to be properly cleaned, so Pola rinsed them under the faucet and put them through the meat grinder—heads, tails, and all. The fetid mass was made into little patties, which she dropped into sizzling mustard seed oil, the only cooking fat we had. The doorbell sounded. I told her I'd answer.

"Who is it?" I asked cautiously through the door.

"Police."

I opened, and a Polish policeman came in.

"A summons from the Gestapo." With an apologetic air he handed me a familiar-looking envelope. I was to appear the following morning at eight.

"Oh well," I thought. "My bag is packed if arrest is what they have in mind."

Again I went through my drawers and papers, burning all but the indispensable. Then Ruth phoned. She had received an identical summons and wanted to know what I thought. When she had hung up, other members of our colony began calling or dropping in with the same message. Did it mean detention?

"I don't know," I told them. "In any case, better take your toothbrush, a pocket comb, and two handkerchiefs with you. And don't forget to eat a hearty breakfast before you leave home."

The large clock was striking eight as we walked in a body into the vestibule of No. 25 Polizei Strasse, as Szucha Avenue was called by the Germans. To our bewilderment, beaming Gestapo agents directed us to the large reception hall, where not so long before we had said goodbye to our internees, and we sat down. Märztz, surrounded by his acolytes, came in.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" He addressed us impressively. "I have an important announcement to make. Our respective governments have come to an agreement—" He paused. Some of us wondered whether the United States and Germany had made peace. "—an agreement to exchange all citizens left abroad. Those of you who wish to return can put your names and addresses on the list."

"A trap! They'll machine-gun us in the woods—like the Jews," Ruth Lawrence whispered to me.

"I can't go. My husband is a Pole. They won't let him go," said one woman.

"My children—I can't leave them," said another.

Hundreds of questions, problems, doubts. We wanted time to think it over. Urged by the others, I walked up to the Kommissar.

"Will you give us time until tomorrow to decide? Some of us would like to talk it over with friends and families."

"I'm sorry. You'll have to make your decision right now. The first transport will leave in a few days, and we have to send the list to Berlin."

After more whispering, most of us had our names put on the list. We reasoned we could always change our minds and remain.

Ruth, Paul, and I walked home together. Paul said heavily, "I can't go. I can't leave Mother and Rita. And poor Father in prison."

"Paul, don't be a fool," said Ruth. "You can't do anything for them, even if you do stay. Go before they arrest you again."

I joined my persuasions to hers.

"Maybe your mother and sister will also be exchanged. Anyway, your parents would prefer to have you in safety."

After a long argument he gave in and went to wire his mother in Laki.

Ruth, with a strange inconsistency, decided to remain in Warsaw.

My own decision had been made before we got home. On the one hand there was Gaither and Mimi. Children were being kidnapped and taken to Germany in increasing numbers. We had been lucky so far. But what if she too——? On the other hand, there was Father and Mother, two old, helpless people. How could I leave them to fend for themselves?

In the afternoon I hurried back to the Kommissar's.

"I'm not going," I told him. "You know why. I've only come to beg you to help me send my little daughter to Laufen so she can leave for America with Gaither. Please help me. I'm asking you not as an official but as a man who undoubtedly also has loved ones of his own."

He sat frowning reflectively, then spoke very sternly.

"You've appealed to my feelings and I will speak frankly. Don't stay. Go. If you remain, we will have to arrest you. You know that even a short term in prison is not a picnic. You

haven't recovered from your illness. And when you are in prison you will be an extra anguish to your family." Looking at my set face, he added, "If you don't go of your own free will, I will force you to go. And better warn your friend Miss Lawrence too." I realized that he meant what he said.

"My child is in the country. Will I be able to go for her? What if the police on Danilowiczowska raise objections?"

"I'll take care of that. Go and bring her to Warsaw at once. I don't know when the first transport will be leaving, but they're likely to phone from Berlin any day, and unless you are right here, packed and ready, you'll be left behind."

That day Ruth and I had our first quarrel in twelve years of friendship. She laughed at Märtz's warning, and nothing I could say would change her decision. She would continue her work in Warsaw.

The ban on traveling had been temporarily lifted, but the train that took me to Bory had only a few passengers, and they huddled in their seats, depressed and nervous. I caught the mood. It was a long time before I ventured to ask of the man sitting opposite, what was wrong.

"The Germans have invented a new trick. People are scared. Only those travel who absolutely must. Yesterday the train we are on was side-tracked near Czestochowa. All the passengers were arrested and taken away."

"Where to?"

"Old people were shot. Young ones were shipped to Germany. Able-bodied men of military age were taken to Oswiecim."

On changing trains in Cracow, I heard that this raid had not been the only one. Several, during the past week, had been made on passenger trains and railroad stations. In Tarnow alone, more than one thousand people had been taken while waiting for trains.

Gloom hung over the house on the hill when I got to Bory. Father said, his kind face unusually grim, "The murder commandos are raging. They must be planning to exterminate the whole population in one sweep." On Wednesday there had

been a massacre in White Water. Peaceful farmers were killed.

In the Tarnow ghetto Jews were hunted and shot on the streets like rabbits. Old Judge Zaremba had come from there on Friday. He had seen corpses lying on the sidewalks, which the police had not permitted to be moved for three days. In New Market a massacre of Jewish children and young people had been raging for a week. Many Jews from Bory—they had been moved to the New Market ghetto—were among those killed. One of them was Mrs. Malvina Gruber, with her old mother and two daughters. The younger one, little Christine, a seven-year-old, pink-cheeked child with stiff pigtails, had been Mimi's playmate.

Mother did not want us to stay an hour longer in Bory than necessary.

The little pink railroad station looked cold and forlorn without its mantle of Virginia creeper, which the Germans had torn down. The hills across the river, where the forest had been cut down ruthlessly, were bare and unfamiliar. A German private lurched by, and Father in accordance with the law, tipped his hat to him. It hurt me, although I knew such petty humiliations could not touch Father.

Just as I had done twelve months before, I stood on the train with Mimi and waved. There they were: Father, Mother, Christine. Older, thinner, shabbier than a year ago, but their eyes just as patient and steadfast as ever.

This time I knew that it would be long before I came back.

Despite the Kommissar's assurance that the day of departure was imminent, I found nothing new in Warsaw. The food we had been ordered to prepare for the trip began to spoil, and to our sorrow we had to eat it. There was little hope of getting another supply in case marching orders from Berlin came unexpectedly.

May brought warmer weather, and I resumed my walks to the Botanical Garden with Mimi. May also brought a new wave of terror.

Himmler, during a recent visit to the General Gouverne-

Pola, ghastly pale and trembling. I put her to bed and gave her a sedative. She told us what had happened.

Kerceli Square, before the war, had been the meeting place for pickpockets, horse thieves, and the underworld of the capital. The war had brought a change. The riffraff had disappeared; it was replaced by destitute intellectuals selling the rest of their threadbare wardrobe, peasants smuggling food, and all who wished to buy or sell anything. It was there, for instance, that I had purchased the wooden-soled sandals which Mimi and I were to wear to America.

People were milling about on the square when Pola got there in the morning. Scouting around for grain and oil, she noticed a detachment of soldiers coming down Wolska Street. The Germans were fully armed and wearing storm helmets, and singing gaily as they marched. No one paid attention to them, for such a sight was not unusual. Troops were forever passing. Suddenly the soldiers broke ranks and took up positions on the corners of side streets, cutting off exits. Many military trucks stopped behind the soldiers and blocked the way. Over the roar of the panic-stricken crowd, megaphones began to blare.

"Stand where you are. Don't run, or we'll shoot. Hands up, and don't try to resist. You are surrounded."

Soldiers, Gestapo, and storm troopers stamped into the square. Here and there a shot rang out; someone had tried to get away. The Germans went from booth to booth and stall to stall, stuffing goods and money into gunny sacks; and from house to house in the neighborhood, dragging people out of their homes and prodding them with their guns towards the trucks.

Later we learned that all those rounded up were taken to the Skaryszewska Street barracks, where transports were usually held, pending shipment. Rapidly men and women were segregated. Their names were taken and registered. No one was given a chance to go for clothes or to say goodbye to those left at home. One man had left a paralyzed mother;

women had left small babies; boys and girls had left their parents.

But how had Pola escaped? Sheer luck. About to be registered, she had been seized by such a violent spell of vomiting that the Germans pushed her out into the street, telling her in disgust to go to the devil. It was estimated that more than three thousand people were captured.

The same week there was a similar hunt in Cracow, where five thousand were taken. And smaller hunts took place in most of the provincial cities.

The raids on streets and trains were supplemented by raids on restaurants. These became so frequent that even the lucky Ola considered closing hers. But she had a household of thirty-six, and could not provide for them unless she kept her business going. Among the waifs she was harboring there were two new ones—Theresa and Barbara, aged 7 and 12. Their father had escaped in 1940 and was with the Polish forces in England. Their mother had been arrested for distributing underground newspapers.

Mr. Roszak, one of our friends, had been released recently after six months in Pawiak. One day he decided to have a square meal for once. So he went to the restaurant 'Pani,' on the second floor of an apartment building on Bracka Street. He sat down and ordered his dinner. Just then the waitress saw police trucks drawing up outside.

"Run, the Gestapo!" she cried out.

Roszak raced into the kitchen and to the attic, where he hid in an empty crate and stayed until the following morning. He was the only one to escape. All the others—owner, personnel, and patrons—were arrested. An old man of seventy-two, one of the cooks, and a waitress who was very plain and had heart trouble, came back two weeks later. The waitress related how the restaurant had been patronized for weeks by a handsome, well-dressed man, who was free with money and a great favorite. He had often divulged interesting political news to the other habitués. On the day of the raid he strode in at the head of the Gestapo.

The waitress was aghast. "We thought you were a Pole," she exclaimed. And he had answered in German, "I've never been here before."

Spring 1942

by GAITHER

LATE in April, Aubert de Larue, Swiss consular official, arrived from Berlin with a woman secretary to interview all candidates for the exchange. He planned to spend several days in camp. There was ample time to go over every case carefully.

Unfortunately Mr. de Larue was entertained during much of his stay. Camp authorities spared neither good will nor liquor to keep him happy. The days slipped by, and the end of his visit drew near. A good part of his work was still undone. He pitched in, but at the last moment difficulties arose.

Washington had stipulated that the men from Laufen be repatriated with the interned diplomats from Bad Neuheim on the first transport, which was to leave in May. But the married men did not wish to leave without their families. Questions arose! How and where could they meet their families? Would wives and children be allowed to go on the first transport, or could husbands wait for the second one? Was there any guarantee that dependents would not be left behind?

To these and other questions, Mr. de Larue could only give vague answers. My predicament was typical. Hania had barely recovered from rheumatic fever. To travel with her and Mimi I would have to remain for a later transport. I decided to do so. De Larue only said, "I can't guarantee that you'll have a place later. Maybe something can be done, but I don't promise."

There was no time to consider individual cases satisfactorily before De Larue departed. He left us confused and apprehensive.

The day the first transport was to leave, the camp whirled with excitement. Ninety men had been chosen. Checked and examined, they were standing in the courtyard ready to leave. A sick feeling assailed me in the pit of my stomach. By not going with them, had I forfeited my only chance to get free? Would Hania, Mimi, and I ever be exchanged?

May and June 1942

by *HANIA*

THE fact that no member of our colony left with the first transport for America irked Märzt. For reasons of his own, he seemed as anxious to see us go as we were to leave. Those who wanted to return to the United States had long completed their preparations. They had made arrangements for other people to occupy their apartments and given away their supplies of food, fuel, and clothing. As our wait lengthened, we asked ourselves uneasily, "When are we leaving?" and "Are we?"

To our urgent letters, the Swiss Embassy in Berlin gave either vague replies or none.

Several times, on Gaither's advice, I tried to go to Berlin, but the Gestapo in Cracow would not grant me a traveling permit. After several telegrams, which remained unanswered, I decided at last to telephone the Swiss Embassy in Berlin—an undertaking that required money, time, and persistence.

After hours of waiting, I got the connection.

"Could I speak to Mr. de Larue?" I asked anxiously.

"Go ahead and speak," was the reply.

"But is this Mr. de Larue?"

"Go ahead and speak."

Though not knowing to whom I was talking, I explained the situation: We (I was speaking for the members of the American Colony) had used up our food supplies, expecting

to leave in May. We had very little money. We had to know when we were leaving. The embassy had notified us to take a four-day supply of food for the journey. Unless we knew ahead of time, it would be impossible, under war conditions, to obtain the necessary items for travel. There were several children among the repatriates whose parents were interned in Germany (American women of Jewish origin had been interned shortly after the men). As I had promised to look after some of these, could they travel with me?

To all this, the noncommittal reply was, "Wait for instructions. If you have any questions, write us."

"But we have written, we have wired, and you have never answered."

"Then come in person."

"We can't get permission to leave the General Gouvernement. Please, can't you send a representative to Warsaw so we can—" My anonymous interlocutor had hung up.

Ten more days went by, and still no communication from the Swiss reached us. Urged by the colony members, I telephoned again.

This time I learned even less. The person on the other end of the wire was either half asleep or drunk, for to all my entreaties and pleas he answered only in grunts. The uncertainty and suspense became unbearable. Several times I had a good mind to give up and go back with Mimi to Bory. The Kommissar advised me to wait.

Feeding Mimi was a problem. There were no vegetables; there was no milk, no meat. Even the horrible little fish had disappeared, and Mimi would not eat the sauerkraut, which was so strong this late in the season that it puckered one's mouth. In our walks I tried to avoid streets with *Nur für Deutsche* stores. Catching sight of their show windows full of fruits and sweets, Mimi would tug at my hand and beg, "Mummy, buy me an orange. Just one, please! They look so good. I'd like to remember what they taste like."

"No, darling. They are not for us. Come, let's go."

"Then get me an apple. A little, tiny one at least!"

"Apples aren't for us either."

"Why? Tell me why not."

Like most parents confronted with a query of cosmic magnitude, I'd answer very firmly, pulling her away from the window, "Because."

What other way was there to explain to a six-year-old mind the logic of German laws?

May was drawing to an end. It had been a bad month. It had marked the death of many friends. There were the Gillewiczes. Both had been arrested when she had been caught teaching a girls' class in secret. She had hung herself in the prison toilet after seeing her husband tortured to death. In Cracow, Antoni Artzt had been picked up in one of the street raids and sent to a slow death in Oswiecim. Pawel Lis had died in the concentration camp near Tarnow. His wife, exceptionally, was permitted to visit him before his death. Knowing that he had nothing more to fear, he told her about the medical experiments German doctors were making on prisoners in that camp. Some of the men were given hypodermics, following which they died of heart failure. A different experiment was tried on Pawel Lis. He was among those who had a strip of material, like adhesive, sewed inside the collar of their prison garb. After a few days, a rash had appeared where the adhesive material touched the skin—and this was followed by a generalized infection immediately manifest in a sore throat and a racking cough. He declined rapidly in strength.

Jack Adamski died also. That was the only blessing of these days. His mother had prayed for his death.

Anti-Jewish activities, which had slackened during the early spring, broke out with unprecedeted violence. The pogroms of Tarnow, New Market, and Mielec, which took place in the first days of May, were but a prelude to the frenzy of annihilation that seized the Germans the middle of the month. When rumors began to circulate in Warsaw that the Lublin ghetto was being liquidated, we did not believe them at first. Impossible! How could a community of fifty thousand people be

wiped out? With all the technique in the science of extermination perfected by the Germans, it was but a matter of days.

Szymon Pasek, a friend of ours, had been drafted by the Labor Bureau some months earlier and sent to work in a lumber mill in a small village named Sobibor, in the Lublin district near Wlodawa. A labor draftee could not give up his assigned work, and so I was surprised to meet him on the street.

"I've run away," he said. "And I don't care if they catch and kill me. I couldn't stand it any longer. God, it was hell."

He told me that during his last ten days he had seen train-loads of Jews brought in daily from Lublin. The victims were removed to special barns, where German Murder Commandos and Lithuanian fascists awaited them, and were at once either machine-gunned or killed with poison gas. The local population had fled into the woods, unable to stand the cries of the living and the stench from thousands of decomposing bodies.

On May 29 the German papers carried a short official notice that the Lublin ghetto had been *erledigt* (liquidated). Two short lines—an epitaph for fifty thousand human beings.

June came, but the Swiss sphinx remained shrouded in mystery. However, Gaither wrote that he had just been to Berlin and that Mimi and I would leave with him on the second transport. I only hoped he was not overoptimistic.

Karol Karst—it was he who had drawn our attention to the 'Mata tea' poster—learned of my expected departure and came to see me. Making sure that we were alone, he drew a small envelope out of his pocket. It contained photographs. I looked at them, unable to speak. There on little squares of glazed paper was the tragedy of the Russian war prisoners. Pictures of bearded skeletons sitting apathetically in the mud of a wire-enclosed field. Of prisoners stripping their dead comrades of clothes under the watchful eye of sentries. Of hundreds of naked bodies in orderly layers in enormous square graves. Of two famished Russians clutching at each other's throats in a struggle over a piece of bread.

"In the camp where these pictures were taken," said Karst,

"hunger-crazed men practiced cannibalism. Twice men were executed for eating the flesh of one who had died."

"How did you manage to get these photographs?"

"One of our people works in a photographic darkroom. The films were brought in by a German to be developed." By "one of our people" Karst meant the underground.

"If only they could be sent to England, to America!" I exclaimed.

"That's why I've brought them. Will you take them with you?"

"I will, but you must help me hide them. They are too large to be sewn in a hem. Where could I put them?"

We examined the two suitcases I intended to take, my shoes, my toilet articles. None of them presented a safe place of concealment. Karst said, "I'll speak to our experts. They probably will give you microfilm instead of the pictures. It won't be larger than a small spool of sewing silk. But are you fully aware of what it would mean if you were caught carrying it?"

"We take the same chance a thousand times a day. I might as well risk my neck for this as for a piece of butter."

Another visitor came in connection with our departure—the daughter of Dr. Urbanowicz, who was a colleague of Dr. Stefanowski's and an old friend of ours. Her father had been released from Oswiecim, thanks to an enormous bribe and the influence of a German, a former patient of his.

"Father is very sick," said Ada, "but he wants to see you." I went with her. Outside his bedroom she whispered, "I want to prepare you. You won't recognize him, but don't show it."

She was right. I had to use all my will power to control my face and voice as I sat down in the chair by the bed. But Dr. Urbanowicz did not leave me time to wonder what had been done to him. As soon as Ada had left us, he said, "You are going to America. That's why I had to speak to you. Maybe you will have an opportunity to tell them over there—" He spoke with great effort. "I want to tell you about Oswiecim. Outsiders don't know what it is like. Few ever get out alive.

I feel it is my duty to tell you—but first we must think of an alibi for you."

We agreed to say, in case we were questioned, that I had come for a medical examination, not knowing he was bed-ridden.

"My story is important not because it happened to me but because it is typical." I knew it. Up to June, 1942, 125,000 people had been taken to this concentration camp alone. Of these, 94,000 had already perished. How many in the ninety-odd other camps in Poland?

Caught the previous summer in one of the street hunts in Warsaw, Dr. Urbanowicz had been taken to Skaryszewska Street with hundreds of others whose only crime was that they were Poles. They were packed into cattle cars, pressed so close against one another that they were unable to sit or lie down. It was summer, the heat was unbearable, the air was stifling. As they jostled and swayed on their way to an unknown destination, thirsty, hungry, covered with sweat and their own excrements, many fainted. A few lucky ones died of heart failure.

"During the forty-eight hours the journey lasted, I could only think of the moment when we would be let out, allowed to lie down. But when we reached our destination—"

In the camp—it was Oswiecim (Auschwitz)—they were immediately ordered to take off their shoes and socks and then led to a yard covered with sharp gravel.

"They made us run in a circle for hours. The skin of our soles wore off; the gravel turned first pink, then dark red, with the blood that stained it. Whenever one of us fainted, the guards dragged him off and revived him either with streams of cold water poured on the head or with a stick jammed into the mouth and twisted sharply. When at last the period of 'outdoor exercise' ended, we dragged ourselves to the barracks, leaving a bloody trail. There was nothing with which to dress the wounds—no bandages, no cotton. I found a piece of paper, but the blood soaked through in a little while and it dropped off. The next day the exercise in the yard was re-

peated, and the next, so that our feet never healed. They turned to a festering, gray-green mass. Every step was agony."

Arbeit macht frei is one of the German mottoes. It was applied in full in Oswiecim. "Work makes a man free." It did. The prisoners were made to labor in the fields, dig ditches, carry loads—until they found release in death. Reveille at four in the morning; breakfast, a few mouthfuls of dark, bitter liquid called coffee; roll call in the yard, bareheaded and barefooted, regardless of the time of year; then chores. The aim was always the same—to kill off as many as possible, in as painful a way as possible during the working day. Work had to be done on the run, under the blows of the overseers.

Food rations were cunningly calculated: they were too small to keep the men alive for long; too large to let them die immediately. With hunger went cold, lack of sleep, work, and *Gymnastik*. All the men acquired the same appearance: bent backs, arms hanging limply from stooped shoulders, a shuffling gait, half-open, drooling mouths, lolling heads, and a vacant stare.

Camp life oscillated between two poles: the gates through which new hundreds were brought daily, and the red brick crematory, where other hundreds found refuge. There were some who committed suicide rather than wait for pneumonia, dysentery, or heart failure to take them. Men endowed with such a strong physique that even tortures devised to break them did not kill, were periodically liquidated by the guards, or by German physicians who used them for scientific experiments.

The toilets were opened only once every twelve hours. And since instead of coffee, the men were given an infusion of herbs that acted on the kidneys, this regulation was torture. To the Germans it was an excuse for more blows and punishments.

Flogging, *Gymnastik*, "the post," standing motionless for hours in the yard, air pumped into the bowels until they burst, were common penalties. Once, when there had been a prison

break, all the prisoners were lined up in the yard and counted, and every tenth man was shot.

"The commander of the camp had a dog trained to bite and tear," said Dr. Urbanowicz. "We hated and feared this savage beast as much as we feared the guards. One day we heard that he had disappeared. The whole camp rejoiced. But when the Germans found the dog's carcass in the garbage dump, all the prisoners were lined up and put through such gymnastics several days running that hundreds died."

While Dr. Urbanowicz spoke I thought of those who would still have to go through this inferno before the monstrous thing ended. Joe had not written for a long time; maybe he had found a swift, merciful death somewhere in North Africa. I was thankful that Gaither was in Laufen.

"I want to tell you about the night of September 5," continued Dr. Urbanowicz. "You must remember that date: the fifth of September, 1941. In the morning seven hundred Russian war prisoners were brought in. I don't know whether they were civilians from workmen's battalions or soldiers, because they were driven on foot from the railroad station completely naked. When evening came these Russians and three hundred of our Polish prisoners were packed into bunkers—the underground cells. They were rammed in with rifle butts. The ramming broke their limbs, ribs, and collarbones. When the last man was inside, the doors were closed and locked, and poison gas was turned on. No one slept that night in the camp. We remained on our feet, listening to the groans from beneath. It seemed to me that the very ground I was standing on was heaving with the throes of death. In the morning we were ordered to remove the bodies to the crematory in lorries which we ourselves had to draw. They were so heavily loaded that we could hardly drag them. One platform broke down, and the greenish corpses spilled all over the ground. It was the first time gas was used in our camp."

"Why does a conspiracy of silence surround our prison camps?" I asked. "Those who come back keep the secret of their experiences. You have told me things that we only guess

at vaguely. Shouldn't the truth be known, not only abroad but here too?"

"We keep what we know to ourselves. It's an unwritten prison law. Why talk of the Oswiecim crematory? In time—unless a miracle happens—it will absorb all Poles—to the last man. It would be unnecessary cruelty to tell of the full horror that inevitably awaits them. I have talked to you because you are going away. Will you remember what I have told you?"

Three days later he was dead. I knew I would never forget.

During my visit I had asked Dr. Urbanowicz if he had seen Vincent Orlik in Oswiecim. Orlik, he said, was ill with typhus and in the camp hospital—a shed with rotten straw on the floor for beds. There were of course no nurses, no medicines. He had no chance of recovery.

Orlik's wife, Josephine, had given me the balance of the ransom in February shortly before I fell ill. I was to keep it until his release. I had turned it over to the Old Lady, for I feared a search of our home. Now I decided I must see the Old Lady at once. She received me with a great show of cordiality.

"I've come to thank you," I said, "for everything you have done. I've just talked to a man who has returned from Oswiecim. Orlik has typhus and won't recover. His case is lost. Since you cannot use the ransom money, I should like to have it for Orlik's wife, who is in great need."

Her face changed with rage. "What do you mean, his case is lost! Who told you? He's a liar. Typhus, indeed! Why, Orlik is free, he is hiding. I myself paid the ransom!"

I saw it all. We had been duped. But Rose? I felt she had collaborated in good faith; I knew it. And now in prison. It became clear to me: As soon as the Old Lady knew that she had been found out, Rose had been put away.

Unless I played my cards right, there would be no reunion with Gaither, no departure for the United States, but Pawiāk instead, then Ravensbruck, or some other camp for women. I managed to control my face and voice, even to smile. "Is

he really free? Oh, that's wonderful, wonderful! You see, I didn't know, I thought he was supposed to come to me."

"We had to change our plans. We had to send him elsewhere. He won't be in Warsaw till later."

"Too bad I won't be here to see him then," I said hastily. "I'm going away."

"You're leaving the city?" she repeated, still looking suspiciously at me from under her beetling brows, but already much calmer.

"Moving to the country. I'll stay there until the war is over. Well, thanks again and goodbye."

It had been a narrow escape.

June 1-12 1942

by GAITHER

AFTER the first transport left for America a sadness descended on the camp. This gradually turned to impatience, then alarm. No word came from De Larue. Would there be no more exchanges? In desperation, we sent individual and collective petitions to the Swiss. Not once were we favored with a reply.

Hania was writing of her own difficulties, and by special dispensation I was allowed to phone her. After many days of waiting I managed to put through my call. Her voice was barely audible and our conversation brief, but, still counting on De Larue's vague promise, I comforted her as best I could. When I hung up, I felt cheered by my own words.

My optimism did not last. The very next day a telegram came from the Swiss with a list of those who would leave on the second transport. Only sixteen names, and mine was not among them. Those of us who were not on the list were desperate.

Aaron Rappoport, one of the internees, suggested sending a

delegate to Berlin. Though the chances of the camp authorities agreeing to such a trip were small, he and I decided to approach them. For four days we got only refusals, but we were finally permitted to see Colonel Koch.

At the first mention of our plan, Koch shook his head, but before he had time to utter a word, Rappoport began to talk. He pointed out all the reasons why we should be sent back to America, the many advantages the Germans would derive from our departure, the inconveniences our further presence would mean to them. All of it was done so glibly and at such a vertiginous rate that Koch was overpowered and began to weaken.

"And whom do you propose to send to Berlin?"

"We should like to send Warfield and Kidder."

"All right," said Colonel Koch. "This is very unorthodox, but under the circumstances I shall permit Mr. Kidder and Mr. Warfield to leave the camp for four days. We'll see what they can do in Berlin."

Kidder and I prepared for our trip. When we went to Koch for final instructions, he handed us a written permit with the admonition not to show it to anyone except the police in Berlin or in case of arrest en route.

"Don't speak English in public," he warned us. "I am responsible for your well-being, and I don't want anything to happen to you on this trip. After this bombing of Cologne (he was referring to the first mass air attack, which had just taken place) the people are pretty well worked up. If they hear you speaking English they might lynch you."

The train from Laufen brought us to Munich in the early afternoon. We were ordering our dinner at the Hotel Excelsior when one of our camp censors, a young lieutenant, walked in. He saw us and sat down at our table.

He shoved a telegram at us. It said: "Home and factory destroyed. Come at once. Father."

"From Cologne," he said. "I'm on my way there now." He told of the panic along the Rhine. Kidder's wife, a German, lived near Cologne, and before catching the night express for

Berlin he tried to telephone her, but phone communications with the bombed area were banned.

In Berlin we immediately registered at the police headquarters, then went to the American Embassy, where the Swiss were now residing. De Larue casually explained that the missing names had been overlooked when the lists for the second transport were made out. We spent the rest of that day going into every case and arguing for each internee.

That night, Kidder, who was an official of the International Harvester Company, was given a dinner by his German business colleagues. He insisted that I accompany him. In a well-known restaurant, in a closed alcove, we were served a rich meal. It is true that the helpings were not large and that we had to surrender some of the ration points that had been given us in Laufen for our trip, but the choice of the dishes and the cuisine were excellent. For one who had come from Russia, occupied Poland, and Laufen, it was an amazing experience.

Our German hosts proudly drew our attention to every culinary masterpiece.

"Where in New York could you find such a dish?"

"Does Chicago have one restaurant that knows how to prepare such an entree?"

"Germany still has many good things if you know where to get them."

I knew only too well by what means the good things had been obtained and only wondered if these contented burghers ever thought of the corpses of countless Poles, Jews, and other persecuted peoples.

The following day Kidder and I went our separate ways, each of us visiting friends in the city. All those I talked to were convinced that the war would end within a year and that German victory in the East was near at hand. "When we've finished in the East," said one of them with magnanimity, "we shall offer England and America generous terms, and they will not be able to refuse. Then we shall have peace and prosperity forever."

On the train back to Munich that night, we sat in our third-

class compartment in almost complete silence, remembering Koch's admonition. Only once in a while Kidder would lean over and say something in German, to which I would reply with a *Ja* or *Nein*.

In Berlin we had heard that Munich had been bombed, but as we strolled through the city, waiting for our train, we saw no evidence of it. When we arrived in Laufen, one-half hour of our furlough remained. We spent it in a tiny restaurant, then slowly walked back to the castle.

The camp officials took us off immediately to the office of the Colonel, who was relieved to see us again.

The internees crowded around us anxiously. When we revealed that many new names had been added to the list, they expressed satisfaction over our trip.

A few days later we had word from the Swiss Embassy. Twenty-seven of us were to leave this time. Feverishly we wrote our last messages to those left in occupied countries and Germany—knowing it would be the last chance of reaching them until the war was over. We prepared food for our journey.

Finally the day came—June 12—and after our persons and luggage had been searched, we were ready to leave the castle. At the last moment, as we were being checked for what seemed the hundredth time, a sergeant rushed up with a telegram. The names of five in our group were read. The Gestapo refused to let them go.

The detained men, with dragging steps, dropped out of our ranks. I felt especially sorry for one of them, Mr. Wardowski, who had been kept out of the first transport in the same way. The stricken faces of these five have remained a haunting memory.

June 12 and 13 1942

by *HANIA*

MIMI and I were playing hide-and-seek among the azaleas of the Botanical Garden when Paul appeared on the run.

"Quick," he cried, "I've been looking for you for an hour. They phoned at eleven that you are leaving this afternoon. The Gestapo wants to see you at once. Go, I'll take Mimi home."

I ran to Szucha Avenue.

"Mrs. Warfield," said the Kommissar, "you, your daughter, and eleven others are to leave this afternoon. You will report here with all your luggage at half-past three. You will be searched." He gave me the names of the other repatriates and told me to phone them from his office.

"What about the rest of the Americans?" I asked him. "Aren't they going?"

"Don't worry. There will be transports every two weeks throughout the summer, until they're all taken. At least that's what the Swiss say."

The telephoning took a long time, and it was almost two o'clock when I reached home. Fortunately Pola and Paul had seen to everything. Our faithful Pola was in tears, but she had bathed and dressed Mimi, finished packing, and managed to buy a loaf of black bread, eight eggs, and some cottage cheese for the journey.

At the last moment, Karst, whom Paul had notified, came to the house.

"Where is the film?" I asked.

"The committee thought the risk was too great," he said. "The group that left Laufen in May was thoroughly searched. With you, coming from Warsaw, they will be even more careful." He probably was right, but I was disappointed.

The whole colony accompanied us to the Gestapo. My heart was heavy as I looked at Ruth and Paul, and the others who were left. I felt like a deserter.

I did not know—could not know—that ours would be the last transport and that Ruth and Paul and others of the colony would be interned a few months later.

Against all expectations we were not searched. Evidently the authorities felt that we would be sufficiently cowed not to try to smuggle anything. They were mistaken. I was carrying a certain slip of paper, reasonably sure it would not be detected. I had it safely tucked away between the stems of some roses friends had given me, and I asked the jolly Gestapo guard at the entrance to hold the bouquet for me while we waited.

The last formalities were completed. One of the black police trucks I had seen so often drove up, and we piled in with our luggage. It took us to a distant freight yard, lurching and jolting all the way. I felt the strangeness of being taken to freedom in a van that symbolized torture, prison, and death for so many.

In our group of thirteen, there were three children: Mimi, three-year-old Halina Spiewak, and a three-months-old baby whose father was already in the United States.

We were piled into two narrow, old-fashioned compartments of a third-class coach. We sat up all night, holding the restless children on our laps. Two Gestapo men who were to accompany us as far as Berlin were in an adjoining compartment.

The next morning at eight we stood on the platform of the Friedrichstrasse Station. We expected to be met by someone from the Swiss Embassy. There was no one to meet us. The two Germans, angry and impatient to be off, stamped around and fumed. One of them finally took me to a public telephone, and I called Mr. de Larue.

"We have arrived. We have children and two sick women with us, and we can't get taxis. What are we to do?"

"All right. I'll send someone over."

By eleven no one had appeared: I phoned again. Half an hour later, a model of sartorial perfection, complete with cane and spats, strolled into the restaurant where we were sipping bitter ersatz coffee, the only thing we could buy, not having

any food stamps. We were exhausted and grimy from the long trip, and our clothes, after almost three years of war, were decidedly shabby. The look that trickled down his nose at us was the essence of contempt.

Staggering under the weight of our suitcases, we followed him on foot to a distant subway station, and after the subway ride had a long walk to the American Embassy. The place was a bedlam. Swiss officials rushed back and forth with papers in their hands and frowns on their faces. Groups of repatriates were waiting, and some of the Americans were crying. I found out that they had come from distant towns only to be told that they could not go after all. In our group, Mrs. Spiewak, Mrs. Fiderkiewicz, and Mrs. Markusiewicz received the same notice. The husbands of the last two had left Laufen in May and were already in the United States. What were these women to do? The passes on which they had traveled to Berlin were made out in one direction only. It was doubtful that they would be able to go back to Warsaw. On the other hand, they had no permission to remain in Germany. They spoke no German, had no money. We had been permitted to bring with us only ten marks per person.

I tried to plead with Mr. de Larue, but he was as elusive as an eel. The only man who evinced some interest was Mr. Soldaty.

One o'clock struck, and a clerk came into the vestibule where we were standing around and ordered everybody to go into the street because the embassy was closing for the lunch hour. Some of our group got up and collected their bundles in utter weariness.

"Stay where you are," I told them. "We are not going."

The clerk called Mr. Soldaty.

"You have no right to do this," I said. "We are sick. We've been traveling all night. You should have had a rest room prepared for us here—a place where we could at least have washed the children."

He gave me a mocking glance.

"All right, General Warfield." We were the only group that stayed.

In the afternoon we received our documents. We said good-bye to Mrs. Markusiewicz, who was being dispatched to a temporary internment camp near Berlin. My entreaties and her tears had not helped. Mrs. Fiderkiewicz, with her baby, were also to be interned. At the last moment Mrs. Spiewak, with little Halina, was permitted to accompany us to the Potsdammer Station to exchange a few words with her husband, who was coming from Laufen with Gaither's group.

We set out towards the station, towards our husbands, towards freedom.

June 12-23 1942

by GAITHER

ON LEAVING the gates of the castle we shouted with joy. Three camp sergeants shepherded us from Laufen to Munich, where, in the middle of the night, we were deposited at the Main Station. In the morning our military guards turned us over to the Gestapo, who were in mufti. I wondered why one of them looked familiar until he reminded me that he was the official who had investigated the complaints of our internees. On the train he came up to engage in an amicable conversation. This seemed to me an opportunity to spread some information about what was going on in the world. I proceeded to give him a true picture of conditions in Poland.

I told him of the murder of many friends, of the destruction of homes, of the breaking up of peaceful families. I spoke of the suffering of hundreds of thousands of Jews, of the mass executions of innocent people. As I talked the Gestapo agent grew more and more restless, but I couldn't tell whether it was the story or my poor German that made him uncom-

fortable. At one point he turned his back on me, went into his compartment, and slammed the door after him. He made no more overtures.

When we arrived at the Anhalter Station in Berlin late in the afternoon it was very warm. We waited. Our escorts did not know what to do with us. At last there appeared an official from the Swiss Embassy—an arrogant, elegant boulevardier, carrying gloves and cane. The insolent air with which he viewed us filled us with resentment. We were exhausted by an uncomfortable trip and loaded down with luggage, but no provisions had yet been made for our transportation to the next point. For another hour we stood waiting for porters.

Finally an arrangement was made about our heaviest bags, and we set out on foot for the Potsdamer Station. Meanwhile the Swiss dandy had disappeared, and we were left in charge of a Gestapo agent who frankly said he did not know his way around the city. I offered to lead the way.

The station was crowded with hundreds of American repatriates. Suitcases and duffel bags cluttered the platform. People stood in long queues, with documents in their hands. Great numbers of police were guarding the exits; others were dashing around.

After a frantic search I found Hania. She was sitting on a suitcase, with a pad of writing paper on her knees. Mimi was playing beside her. Holding them in my arms, I could hardly believe that our reunion was real.

But we could not allow ourselves long greetings. One suitcase, with a few precious possessions of ours, was missing and had to be hunted for, and I had to take my place in the line of those waiting for travel documents. Mr. Spiewak was begging me, "Do something. Do something. They won't let Irene and the baby leave with us."

From Hania I learned of the mysterious technical difficulty which had caused the Swiss to refuse exit papers to three of the women she had shepherded out of Warsaw. I had a long argument with De Larue, and at the end Mrs. Spiewak and little Halina were permitted to join our transport. Nothing

could be done for the others, since they had already been shipped out of Berlin to an internment camp.

It was dusk when the long train that was to take us out of Germany pulled in. We settled in the comfortable second-class coaches and relaxed. It was really true. We were going home.

Under cover of night we passed swiftly through the heart of Germany, and the next day across the Rhine and the Saar Valley and into occupied France, skirting Paris in a wide arc. We stopped at Bordeaux. In the gloom of the deserted station, we caught sight of a few apathetic Frenchmen, but had no chance to speak to them. At Hendaye we waited until the transport of Germans from America, for whom we were being exchanged, arrived from Lisbon.

The station was gaily decorated with swastikas and bunting. A military band burst into the *Horst Wessel Lied* when the exchange train bearing Germans crossed the Spanish border and came to a halt. The German repatriates who spilled out of it were a well-fed, well-dressed group. They beamed on the flags, the band, and the officials who greeted them, while drab French railroad men carted their heaps of expensive luggage and baskets of fruit. As soon as they had boarded a *Vaterland*-bound express, we were transferred to a pale-green modernistic Spanish train. In an unbelievably short time it brought us to the capital of Portugal.

The sun-drenched city of Lisbon, with its slow-moving, happy-go-lucky crowds, stores overflowing with goods and fruit, and scarcity of policemen, bewildered us at every step. We would gladly have spent some time in these lush surroundings, but our exchange ship, the Swedish S.S. *Drottningholm*, was waiting, and we passed the next two days clearing our documents at the American consulate, along with hundreds of other repatriates. On June 21 we boarded the boat, and on June 23 we left Europe for America.

The decks swarmed with a colorful crowd representing many types—from blond Norwegians to swarthy Latin Americans. Those of German extraction had not lost their strut or

self-assurance. The French still looked elegant and modish; the Dutch placid and well fed. They chatted, joked, played games, and made plans for the future.

As we moved among these repatriates, we could not find within ourselves the joy, the intoxication, that freedom was supposed to bring. Between them and us, who came from the land of the living dead, there was no rapport. The life we had just left had exacted unlimited tenacity and courage, even for the most commonplace act. The web of our daily existence was spun with threads of tragedy and heroism. We felt lost in the new atmosphere.

After putting Mimi, stuffed with bananas and oranges, to bed, we made our way to the upper deck. The brilliantly lit white ship, with its blue and yellow markings, sailing the empty seas, was eerie to us. For the first time in three years we were able to relax. We were traveling towards the future.

But we were paupers, robbed of much more than money, clothes, and home. Gone was the illusory sense of security which stone, concrete, and steel impart; the Luftwaffe had swept that aside. Gone was the confidence in bank accounts and securities. The machine guns of the *Mord Kommando* had dispersed trust in human nature. Our belief in the importance of physical life lay buried in the mass graves of Palmiry. Our faith in the natural progress of mankind had died behind the ghetto walls. We faced the future despoiled of all that man usually builds his life upon. Only faith in God remained.

A voice in a drawling, Midwestern accent—the speaker was an American businessman whom the war had caught in Paris—said, “Mr. Warfield, could you settle an argument? Is the word N-a-z-i pronounced Nahtsee or Nazee?”

The talk drifted from topic to topic. It became clear that our companion considered peace the supreme goal of existence, without even a thought of justice crossing his mind. In his horror of war, he was ready to make every concession to prevent it. This disturbed us.

“Don’t you see,” Hania pleaded, trying to put into words convictions born in anguish, “that when nations value comfort

more than freedom, prosperity more than human rights, peace more than justice, they have lost the right to exist? Don't you see that we must be ready to sacrifice and suffer? Our great enemy is not war, pain, and death but aloof indifference. Only Christian ideals, with their concern for human rights, will save the world."

Embarrassed by this outburst, the Midwesterner patted Hania's hand gently and said sympathetically, "Of course, I understand how you feel. You have been through a lot. You mustn't think too much of what has happened. By and by you will get a more normal outlook."

When he had gone, Hania turned to me with a troubled smile.

"Gaither, how can we make them see that it was this 'normal' outlook that caused Munich, Pearl Harbor, and the whole catastrophe? Only poets and prophets can project themselves beyond the limits of their personal experiences. In what words can we speak to people that they will understand us?"

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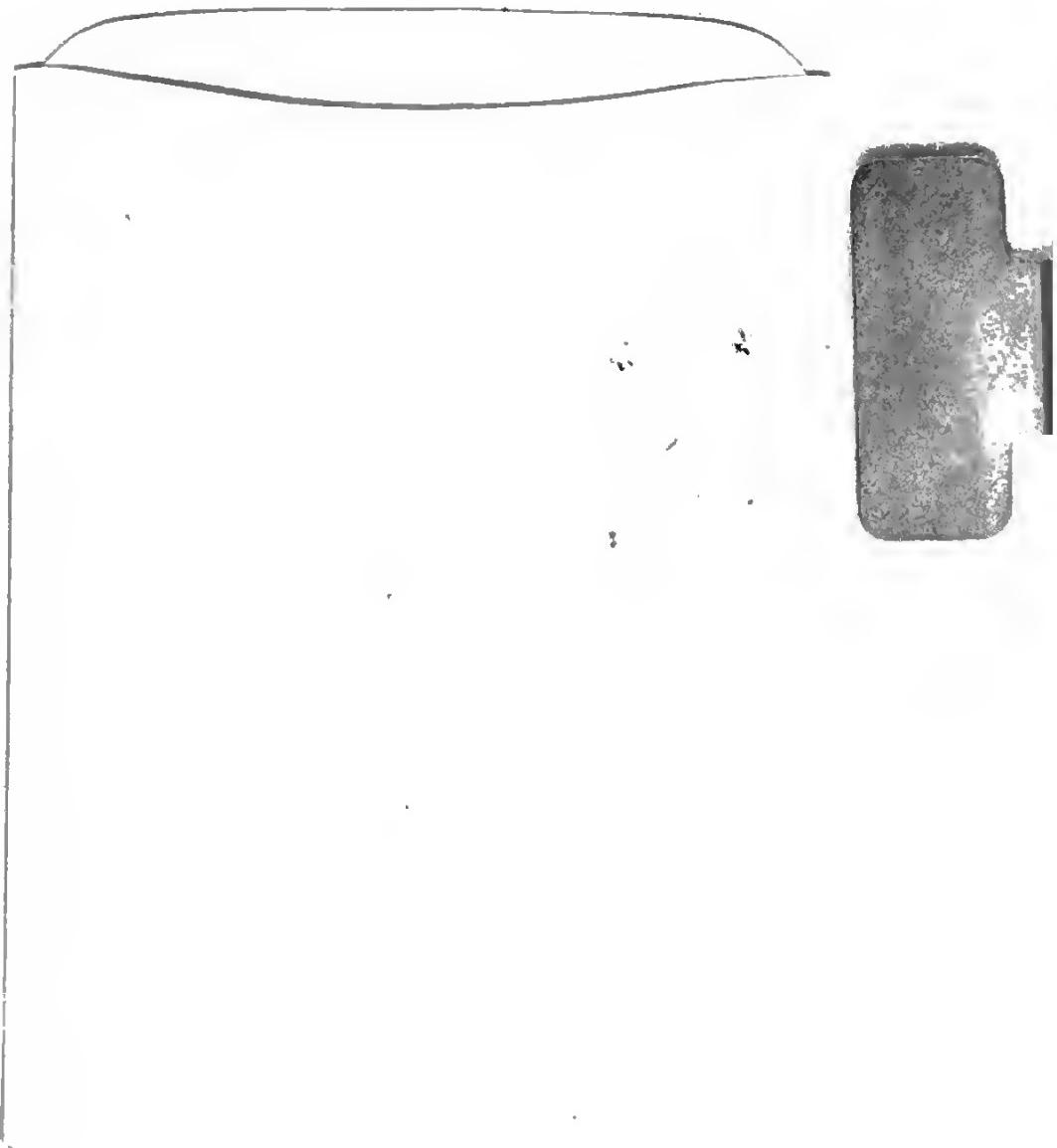


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